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THE MORNING HOUR:

FOR

FAMILY WORSHIP AND PRIVATE MEDITATION.

BY

REV. A. B. EARLE, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "BRINGING IN SHEAVES," "THE REST OF FAITH,"
ETC., ETC.

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TO

ALL WHO DESIRE TO READ

The Word of the Lord,

THIS BOOK

IS PRAYERFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.

THE MORNING HOUR.

P R E F A C E.

WHEN Christ was about leaving the world, he said, "Father, the hour is come;" not *an* hour, but "*the* hour." That hour, in its far-reaching results, embraced every hour since time began. So in our lives there are periods that mould and shape our destiny. These are seed-hours; so that we reap, in the long harvest-days that follow, what has been sown in these hours. Probably no hour in our lives moulds and shapes our well-being for time and eternity as the morning hour spent with God. Then we are fresh and vigorous, and can take in and digest more truth than at any other time. To spend this best hour with our best Friend, for our best possible good, seems so suitable and so important, that we have called it "THE MORNING HOUR."

This hour will govern the day. The influence of family worship is wonderful on the whole household. It seems to anchor each heart to the truth for the day. It girds up the loins of the mind for work for God and man. It prepares us to resist temptation, to endure trials, and not to be drawn away by success. We go forth from this Divine granary to sow the seed of truth during the day.

To make this golden hour as interesting and profitable as possible, we have arranged a portion of the word of God of sufficient length for each member of the family to read more or less. It is not so lengthy as to be wearisome, and yet will

furnish much food for the day. The comments and remarks that follow will, we trust, give much comfort, and be a real benefit to the reader. To read carefully the scripture selected, and the comments following, will occupy about five minutes of each day. We recommend that each member of the family, at the morning devotion, read a portion of the scripture selected, and the leader or head of the family read the comments. As the hymns selected are designed to be in harmony with the scripture and comments, we hope in all cases they will be sung if possible; if not, read.

Let prayer in the *family* be *brief*; and as *lengthy* as any one chooses in the *closet*. In this way "The Morning Hour" will be anticipated with as much interest as the morning repast for the body. We do not wish any one to read the Bible less, but more. We trust this arrangement will not only render the devotions in the family less wearisome, and more interesting, but afford much help to those who read this book, alone, or in any form, or place. This work we plan to follow with a companion volume for evening worship and meditation, entitled "THE EVENING HOUR."

As we have now visited every one of the United States and several British provinces, and have seen so many start on the Christian journey, and urged all under suitable circumstances to observe family prayer, we hope in this way to be present and mingle in these services, and speak words of cheer to Christians, and persuade others to seek Christ at once. Also to carry a balm to many a sick-room, and many a lonely home.

Early in the preparation of the book we secured the assistance of Rev. A. Judson Padelford, an able and devoted minister of Jesus. The work is now completed. After much prayer, we commit its pages to the care of Him who has promised that a cup of cold water given in His Name shall be rewarded. May the Divine Spirit accompany it on its mission of love, and to the Triune God we will give all the glory.

A. B. EARLE.

NEWTON, MASS.

1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

4 For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

5 They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.

6 Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of

our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

10 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad because of thy judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

PSALMS, xlviii. 1-14.

In this portion of scripture we are invited to "walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof;" to look at her on the outside and on the inside; to observe her bulwarks of defense and her beautiful palaces of worship where God has recorded his name. There a convention of kings was held, intending to attack the city; but finding God in her for a defense, they were troubled, and hasted away. Every true Christian can say, "This God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." O Zion, what a happy lot is thine! As this is the first day of a new year, let us enjoy the great pleasure of wishing every reader of this book "a happy new year." Not this day alone, but may every day of the year be a happy one. To make this a happy year in the highest sense, let us come together for a few minutes each morning. Let us ask the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to sit with us, kneel with us, converse with us, and sing with us. In such gracious fellowship our hearts will find rest to-day and all the years before us, and naught shall come to us without our almighty Keeper's permission. As we read the Word, let us pause after each reading, and gather ripe fruit from this tree of life. May we have a profitable sitting together this year, and be able to say at its close, We have eaten of the fruit of Canaan.

5s & 12s. Come, let us anew
Our journey pursue;
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear;
His adorable will
Let us gladly fulfil,
And our talents improve
By the patience of hope and the labor of love.

O that each, in the day
Of his coming, may say,
"I have fought my way through;
I have finished the work thou didst give me
to do;"
O that each from his Lord
May receive the glad word,
"Well and faithfully done;
Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne."

20 And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the Lord your God. And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and the king.

21 And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel:

22 And did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him unto the Lord to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest.

23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.

24 And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the king.

25 And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

26 Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.

27 And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

28 And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor; and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

29 Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer,

30 With all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

1 CHRONICLES, xxix. 20-30.

It is an exceedingly pleasant sight to see a whole family engaged in worship, all the members heartily waiting on God, each heart pouring forth its own gratitude, yet all uniting, as the father leads in prayer. So also a whole congregation, with bowed heads, joining the minister in his prayer and praise. How much grander the sight when a whole nation, assembled in the persons of their leading men, bow their heads, and worship God! The heart of David must have rejoiced greatly at such a sight. So he comes to the end of his days: truly a fitting close to a long, stirring, useful life. Many were his trials; but God's mercies more than matched them, so that he came down to his grave in a ripe old age, rich and full of honors. But the longest life quickly ends, and the aged must give way to the young, who crowd after them. Solomon succeeds to David's throne, making a most brilliant entry on his public life. He found a willing people. But prosperity tried him, and he was not as good a man as his father. Favored with wisdom, riches, honors, he fell into grievous sins. "Neither poverty nor riches." This is far the best for most persons. Great wisdom will not keep one from fearful sins. The rich are exposed to great temptations; those in honor may fall. God only can keep us. We all need much grace. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

L. M. In vain on earth we hope to find
Some solid good to fill the mind;
We try new pleasures, but we feel
The inward thirst and torment still.

Great God, subdue this vicious thirst,
This love of vanity and dust;
Cure the wild fever of the mind,
And feed our souls with joys refined.

2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

* Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

6 For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

9 For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of

Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

11 O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13 And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

15 Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

ISAIAH, liv. 2-16.

The prophet sings of the enlargement of the church. What was to Israel only a promise, far away, has become to us a fulfilment. The church of Christ had a small beginning, terrible persecutions, but grew mightily notwithstanding. The tent had been enlarged, the cords lengthened, the stakes strengthened. A most wonderful house had been prepared. Its sapphire foundation was garnished with the most costly and beautiful colors. Its windows were agates, and its gates carbuncles, while its borders were trimmed with stones of varying hues. We lay our foundations with unsightly stones; not so did God lay the foundation of his glorious temple. The deep foundations of the work of grace are as sapphires for preciousness and costliness. The covenant of grace is firmer than adamant, more enduring than jewels. Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone, "blending in one the deep blue of earth's ever-rolling ocean, and the azure of its all-embracing sky. The foundations of eternal hopes are the justice and faithfulness of God, clear and cloudless as the sapphire." Its windows are agates; not entirely transparent, they soften the light of God's glory, so that we can endure it. Faith, experience, and sanctification are some of these windows. So ample is this building, that it can take in the whole Gentile world with the Jewish, and still say, "Yet there is room." "Happy Zion, what a favored lot is thine!"

C. M. O Zion, spread more wide thy tent;
Stretch forth thy straining cords;
The promise dawns; the clouds are rent,
Earth, thou shalt be the Lord's.

Haste, haste, ye years of toil and woe;
Heaven, earth, break forth and sing,
"The kingdoms of the world are now
Thy conquest, peerless King."

1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart,

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

MATTHEW, xvii. 1-13.

What a picture is before us! The clear, bold outline of the mountain, the bright cloud resting upon it, the six figures grouped together in relations never repeated within the experience of man, make a sublime scene. "Not even Raphael, in the master-painting of the world, has worthily conceived it,—so immeasurable, so unattainable, is the height of glory to which the spiritual meaning of the transfiguration lifts it above the range of human art. The Old Testament's great lawgiver and grandest prophet came in heavenly forms and splendor to do homage to the Son of man on earth, to testify of the crucifixion as the crowning of their work, and to greet the apostles of his future church." Supreme in authority as the Son of God, Jesus must be heard and obeyed by every soul that would be saved. Has Jesus never said to you, Come up into the mountain; and, obeying the summons with a heart full of love, have you not with a faith-lit eye looked on him, and received sweet revelations of grace and glory? Such experiences are not uncommon to his beloved ones. He delights to take his disciples with him, and only a lack of faith can hinder them from such visions. Although we may not tarry on the mountains, we may carry this blissful experience in all the work to be done; and say in every place where duty calls us, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

7a. Palms of glory, raiment bright,
Crowns which never fade away,
Gird and deck the saints in light;
Priests, and kings, and conquerors, they.

Yet the conquerors bring their palms
To the Lamb amidst the throne,
And proclaim, in joyful psalms,
Victory through his cross alone.

Who were these? On earth they dwelt,
Sinners once of Adam's race;
Guilt, and fear, and suffering felt,
But were saved by sovereign grace.

They were mortal, too, like us;
And when we, like them, shall die,
May our souls, translated thus,
Triumph, reign, and shine on high.

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all

manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

MATTHEW, v. 1-18.

We have in this selection the characteristics of a true Christian. First, he is poor in spirit. He mourns over any unlikeness to Jesus. He is meek. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness. He is merciful. He is pure in heart. He is a peacemaker. He is more or less persecuted for Christ's sake. When reviled or persecuted for his religion, he bears it meekly. He exerts a healthful, saving influence on those around him. His light is not hid, but thrown off upon all about him. Are all these evidences of conversion seen in our lives, and felt from our example? If so, already Christ's beatitudes in this Scripture are ours. This is the family patrimony. O what a mine of blessing! What a treasure! Who would not be a Christian? Not one jot or tittle of the law will pass till all be fulfilled. Any one doing or teaching these things shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. But any one breaking the least of these commands, and teaching others to do the same, is the least specimen of a Christian,—can hardly be called one at all. Let us remember therefore that Christ must be made to us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; a very different thing from the righteousness of the Pharisees. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

S. M. O, watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
Thy arduous work will not be done
Till thou obtain thy crown

1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with

justice from henceforth even for ever. The seal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

8 The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

9 And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart,

10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.

11 Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together;

12 The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

13 For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts.

14 Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.

15 The ancient and honorable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.

16 For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.

ISAIAH, ix. 1-16.

About seven hundred and fifty years before the birth of Jesus, this prophet not only foretold his birth, but what his name should be. Here this child is called "The Everlasting Father." We learn in Scripture how God saves the lost. Three distinct, but united, persons in the Godhead. One must take man's nature on himself, sin excepted, and offer a human sacrifice on a divine altar. In this nature he is called the Son. Without this blood no one could be saved; and as this blood is alone in the Son, the Holy Spirit convinces or convicts the sinner, then leads him to the blood of the Son. The sinner comes back to God and heaven through the cleansing blood, and every attribute of the Godhead bids him welcome. Here mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other over a redeemed soul; so that Jesus is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." There was no other way; Jesus must be born and die, or we must all perish forever. No other name by which a sinner can be saved. O precious Jesus! we owe everything to thee! Let us come at once to this blood, and be cleansed. Let us make known to all around us, this "Wonderful Child."

C M. To us a Child of hope is born,
To us a Son is given;
And him shall all the earth obey,
And all the hosts of heaven.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
For evermore adored,
The Wonderful, the Counsellor,
The great and mighty Lord.

3 Then Job answered the Lord, and said,

4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

6 Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

10 Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

11 Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.

12 Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

13 Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

15 Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

16 Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.

17 He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

18 His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron.

19 He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

20 Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.

21 He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

22 The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.

23 Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

24 He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snarcs. *JOB, xl. 3-24.*

Job and his friends had carried on a long discussion on a subject that was entirely too deep for them, but did not reach a wholesome conclusion. God at length interposes, and ends the controversy. But he says not a word on the subject of their dispute. He does not vindicate his proceedings, or state why the wicked often prosper and the righteous suffer; nor does he refer to the retributions of a future world. The truth he presents is, that since his works prove him to be so great and wise, there should be entire confidence in him. He rouses Job to consider ponderous themes, and confounds him with weighty questions, which completely satisfy him of his folly, and convict him of his sin. It is very humbling to think of the vanity of our life, and our ignorance. We cannot settle the question of the age of creation. We see the skill and wisdom displayed in these mighty works of God. Since he has taken such care to secure the perfect working of the natural universe, shall we question his wisdom and goodness in his dealings with man? We are of more value to God than all the rest of creation. He carries us on his heart. He makes nature subservient to our well-being. Shall we ever doubt his love, or question the wisdom of his doings? Nothing could be more unreasonable. Whatever he permits to come upon us is a part of his goodness towards us.

S. M. Ah, how shall fallen man

Be just before his God!

If he contend in righteousness,
We fall beneath his rod.

If he our ways should mark
With strict, inquiring eyes,
Could we for one of thousand faults
A just excuse devise?

The mountains, in thy wrath,

Their ancient seats forsake;

The trembling earth deserts her place;
Her rooted pillars shake.

Ah, how shall guilty man

Contend with such a God?

None, none can meet him, and escape,
But through the Saviour's blood.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

MATTHEW, x. 25-40.

In reading this portion of Christ's instruction, we startle at first that religion should so disturb the domestic circle, set families at variance, and cause the wicked to say all manner of evil about the humble Christian. But it is so. They think it strange that we are not willing to go with them in sin, as we did once; how man can be born again they cannot understand. We are all, by nature, in love with sin, and do not like to be disturbed. We want peace when there is no ground for peace. The wicked want their dear ones to remain with us; but when their hearts are made alive in Jesus, then they want all their friends to come with them. Jesus was hated, and finally put to death, not because he was wicked, but because he insisted on men's giving up and forsaking sin. So strangely has the fall affected every one. But it is enough for the Christian if he can be treated as well as Jesus was. Let us do our duty, even if our work is not appreciated. Confess Christ before men, that he may confess us in heaven. Even a cup of water given to a Christian, because he is a Christian, shall receive a reward. Let us go on with our work as Christ's children. If any one is displeased with our faithfulness, we can be kind and courteous, and hope to save some, and at last to hear our Redeemer say, "Well done."

S. M. Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign:
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

COLOSSIANS, iii. 1-17.

What a feast of rich things the Holy Spirit gives in this selection! Christ is the believer's life. "He has brought us into the region of life, the region of God's everlasting smiles." He has given us life, so that we hate sin, and love holiness. He is the substance of our spiritual life. By his life we live. "He is in us the hope of glory, the spring of our actions," the centre of all our thoughts. This relation to Christ involves certain duties. Raised by him from the death of sin, we should seek those things which are above; our lives should conform to heavenly things, and our affections should centre there. So every earthly passion should be subdued, and all conformed to the will of Christ. The whole being is to be brought into sweet and joyful subjection to him. He has a claim on our warmest love. He does not ask that it equal, but that it resemble his; not of the same strength, but same kind. "A pearl of dew will not hold the sun, but it may hold a spark of its light." The child's cup cannot hold the ocean, but it can some of its drops. We, then, may have the same kind of love, and show it, as Jesus did. So Christ's word will dwell in us, and we shall do all things for God's glory, in Christ's name.

C. M. Jesus, I love thy charming name;
'Tis music to my ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That earth and heaven might hear.

Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust;
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust.

Thy grace shall dwell upon my heart,
And shed its fragrance there,—
The noblest balm of all its wounds,
The cordial of its care.

I'll speak the honors of thy name
With my last, laboring breath,
And, dying, clasp thee in my arms,
The antidote of death.

1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

2 Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?

3 Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;

4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

5 That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David;

6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

7 Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

8 The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.

9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die.

10 And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue: for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord.

11 For, behold, the Lord commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.

AMOS, vii. 1-11.

God sent his prophet Amos, to remind Israel of the ruin which had come on other cities and people, and assured them that he would abandon them to a similar doom, and bring on them utter destruction. He had sought to bring them to repentance; to lead them to forsake their sinful ways, but in vain. Hence indignation and wrath were the portion of their cup. Men readily pride themselves on some supposed advantage, and hastily draw the conclusion that they should escape the righteous judgments of God. Remembrance of his dealings with others ought to satisfy them that there is no immunity in their fancied securities. The possession of good health leads many to be easy about any preparation for death: yet how many with the best of health suddenly drop out of life. Wealth makes men easy about the future: yet it often takes wings and flies away, and then, with no God to lean upon, how miserable they are. This world is no place for ease or carnal security. If you are a believer in Christ, you should fill up your life with holy activity. If not yet saved, haste to the refuge; the storm of vengeance is gathering. If found lingering in the plains of ease, the devouring fire or sword will suddenly come upon the rejecters of Christ.

H. M. Where is my Saviour now,
Whose smiles I once possessed?
Till he return, I bow,
By heavy grief oppressed:
My days of happiness are gone,
And I am left to weep alone.

Jesus, thy smiles impart;
My gracious Lord, return,
And ease my wounded heart,
And bid me cease to mourn:
Then shall this night of sorrow flee,
And peace and heaven be found in thee.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak

every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

EPHESIANS, iv. 17-32.

The grace of God makes a marked change in the human heart. It drives out the brood of lusts, and fills their place with holy thoughts and noble purposes. Every man feels that, if he could live his life over again, he could improve it. Christ's gospel aims to make our life true,—to keep us from those practices which degrade us. His words give us the pattern of the new man created in Christ Jesus, and thus restored to a true and holy life. "The characteristics of true manhood are a child-like obedience to God; an unselfish regard for others; a self-sacrificing devotion to truth. This is a renewal in the spirit of the mind,—a radical change in its objects of thought, in its aims and desires, in the bent and purpose of living." This is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit must move our tongue when we speak for Jesus; must make intercessions when we pray; must help to imitate the Master. We can rise to no heights of spirituality, and bear no fruit, unless aided by the Spirit. The gospel requires of every one a change that affects the tongue, the temper, the desire, the act, the whole heart and life. It is not simply dropping off external sins that makes a man perfect in Christ, but cultivating a tender, forgiving, loving, Christ-like spirit.

C. M. How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those that love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word!

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart!

When, free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.

8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring up for me whom I shall name to thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.

15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

17 And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David:

18 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executest his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day.

19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

1 SAMUEL, xxviii. 7-19.

How terrible is a guilty conscience! Nothing makes the heart tremble so greatly. Saul remembered his past sins. The innocent blood of God's priests shed. His sins rob him of his courage, and cause fearful forebodings. From the heights of Gilboa he looked on the formidable array of the enemy, and his courage failed. The dark shadow of coming events fell on him. He besought counsel and help of the Lord, but no answer came. Samuel was dead; Abiathar and the ephod were with David. The Lord had forsaken him. No message came; neither by dreams, nor by vision, nor by prophets. The cup of his iniquity was full; its bitter dregs he must drain. It is night, and to-morrow is the day of battle. Alarm and anxiety are increasing. Light he will have; if not by lawful, then by unlawful means. God has refused to speak, but he will compel a voice from the lips of the dead. The enchanter shall bring up Samuel, and he shall speak for God. God will keep silence no longer. Not by the incantation of the witch, only as permitting her to be the apparent means, but at the command of the Almighty, Samuel came to speak the word of doom. His end is near; he wanted to know the future, and God unrolled the scroll a little way, and on it he read the fearful words, — defeat, wounds, death, infamy. It is a fearful thing to forsake the counsel of the Almighty.

12s. & 8s. When the harvest is past, and
the summer is gone,
And sermons and prayers shall be o'er;
When the beams cease to break of the
blest Sabbath morn,
And Jesus invites thee no more;

When the rich gales of mercy no longer
shall blow,
The gospel no message declare, —
Sinner, how canst thou bear the deep
wailings of woe?
How suffer the night of despair?

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight:

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation:

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

2 CORINTHIANS, v. 6-21

“We must all appear before the judgment seat;” not of the Father, not of the Holy Spirit; but of Christ. The grand court will not open until the mediatorial work is done, so that the Judge can take his seat on the judgment throne. This will be at the end of time. Then we all can see what we have done. No merit in our acts, yet heaven or hell will depend on one act which must be put forth in this life. If we accept of Christ and his atoning work, he washes out all our guilt, whether we are rich or poor, vile or moral. If we reject him, it is not possible for us to be saved. The judgment will make this plain. We persuade, not drive, nor frighten men, in view of the terror of the Lord. See fallen angels! how terrible! See the old world! See Sodom and Gomorrah! See Christ on the bloody cross! O, what terrible wrath! Knowing this we weep, we mourn, we plead with tears, that men be reconciled to God. Divinity is in human flesh, to reconcile us to himself. Are we new creatures in Christ? Do we groan to be clothed with our heavenly house? Are we willing “to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord?” How comforting is such a hope!

C. P. M. Before me place, in dread array,
The pomp of that tremendous day,
When thou with clouds shalt come
To judge the nations at thy bar;
And tell me, Lord, shall I be there
To meet a joyful doom?

Be this my one great business here,
With serious industry and fear,
Eternal bliss t' insure,
Thine utmost counsel to fulfil,
And suffer all thy righteous will,
And to the end endure.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest.

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

20 For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:

22 But ye are come unto mount Zion, and

unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

26 Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

HEBREWS, xii. 14-29.

What if we should fail of heaven! We have a hope, but on what does it rest? Is it anchored to the "Rock of Ages"? Remember, without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Do we persistently strive for a holy heart and life? There are many roots of sin, and grace alone can remove them. Look diligently, lest we fail of that grace. God knows our dangers, hence so many warnings and admonitory exhortations. But we will not stay at Sinai's fearful base, for Mount Zion, glorious in light, radiant with heavenly beauty, invites us. Gathered about the throne of God and the Mediator, what an innumerable company of holy beings are seen! Many who on earth were imperfect, are perfect now. How came they there? It was by the way of the cross: Jesus' blood cleansed them. They came to him vile and sinful, but plunged into the open fountain, and came forth stainless. Many on earth turn aside from the fountain of blood; but the saints in heaven sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. He redeemed us with his blood." That blood is the life of all vital godliness; and if we are ever in the new Jerusalem, among the holy, we shall sing of redeeming blood. We need to come often to Jesus. Past experiences are not enough; the soul will starve on them. He has hourly something new. Refuse not him that speaks: his blood is the only peace offering. An unreconciled God is a consuming fire.

In the Christian's home in glory

There remains a land of rest;

There my Saviour's gone before me,

To fulfil my soul's request.

CHORUS—There is rest for the weary, &c.

He is fitting up a mansion,

Which eternally shall stand;

For my stay shall not be transient

In that holy, happy land.

CHORUS—There is rest, &c.

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

MATTHEW, xxv. 31-46.

We have been reading about the judgment — the final judgment day. O what a day that will be! When we shall all meet again for a final parting. Husbands and wives, parents and children, pastors and people, will all meet again, and in many instances part again. Jesus, once scorned and crucified, will then be our Judge. He will speak just as tenderly then as he does now. If we are not Christians, he will say, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" He will then show us that our treatment of the poorest specimen of humanity is our treatment of him. God has already provided a beautiful home for his children. That home is in waiting for them. Crowns, thrones, and robes are ready for them. But those who do not accept Christ and his atoning work will hear the Judge say, "Depart from me; I never knew you." O to be lost forever! Who can endure the thought? No wonder Jesus wept and groaned; or that Paul was willing to be crucified to save souls. But the judgment will give universal satisfaction. All will see that God cannot do differently. Every tongue will confess there, and every knee bow. No murmuring word there. Let us all be ready for his coming.

C. P. M. When thou, my righteous Judge,
shall come
To call thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all;
But can I bear the piercing thought?
What if my name should be left out,
When thou for them shall call?

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us

do good unto all men; especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

GALATIANS, vi. 1-18.

The law of Christ is for Christians to "love one another," as he loved them. Fulfilling that law would transform society and change our world into an Eden indeed. It would lead us to look with pity on an erring brother, while we seek his restoration, remembering that we are exposed to temptations. We should bear his burdens, not allowing him to be crushed by them. Our estimate of ourselves should be near the truth, so as to keep us humble. We cannot set aside God's arrangements. His inevitable law is, that a man reaps in kind what he sows. If we cherish the corrupt principles of our fallen nature, we shall have only a heritage of corruption, degradation, and spiritual death. While if we cherish "the spirit," we shall at the due time have life and joy everlasting. God's people will not fail of a harvest of spiritual fruit. "What shall the harvest be?" Here is God's unchangeable law. We know what seed we are sowing; we can tell to-day whether the harvest will be life or death. The cross is the only true object of glorying. Men glory in other things, but Paul found nothing to be compared with that. Then he first found a correct view of himself: a knowledge of time and eternity; and learned the way to be saved.

S. M. Sow in the morn thy seed;
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed;
Broadcast it o'er the land;—

And duly shall appear,
In verdure, beauty, strength,
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,
And the full corn at length

Thou canst not toil in vain;
Cold, heat, and moist, and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky.

Thence, when the glorious end,
The day of God, shall come,
The angel-reapers shall descend.
And heaven cry, "Harvest home!"

1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which

bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

MATTHEW, iii. 1-17.

The Morning Star of the new dispensation had arisen. He came to herald the coming of the Sun of Righteousness, whose beams were to lighten and gladden the world. Prophets had foretold his rising, and indicated what his work was to be. For four weary centuries no prophet's voice had been heard by Israel. Many were asking, "How long?" John seemed to be the connecting link between the Old and New Testaments. He made his appearance suddenly in coarse apparel, and lived on plain food; proclaiming an immediate and thorough repentance to all; refusing to baptize except on evidence of repentance. Multitudes heard and were baptized. John at first declined to baptize Jesus, from a deep sense of unworthiness, but yielded when he saw its importance. The Holy Spirit, like a dove, lighted on Jesus at his baptism. John assured his hearers that the axe was already cutting at the root, and it would soon be too late. So God calls all men now to repent, and lead lives of faith. God will soon separate the wheat from the chaff. The one will be garnered, the other perish. Shall those who heard John preach in the twilight of the gospel repent, and change their manner of life, and we, under the noon of gospel light, turn away and perish? Come, Holy Spirit, with thy quickening power, and melt all our hearts into love for Christ.

C. M. Vain are the hopes the sons of men
On their own works have built;
Their hearts by nature all unclean,
And all their actions guilt.

Let Jew and Gentile silent bow,
Without a murmuring word;
Let all the race of man confess
Their guilt before the Lord.

In vain we ask God's righteous law
To justify us now;
Since to convince and to condemn
Is all the law can do.

Jesus, how glorious is thy grace!
When in thy name we trust,
Our faith receives a righteousness
That makes the sinner just.

18 And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents.

19 They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.

20 And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head.

21 And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the law-giver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel.

22 And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.

23 And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full with the blessing of the Lord, possess thou the west and the south.

24 And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.

25 Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

26 There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

27 The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

28 Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

29 Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.—DEUT. xxxiii. 18-29.

Israel was a highly favored people; loved of God, and tenderly dealt with. Who can estimate what they would have been, had they obeyed him in all things? But these words of the departing prophet are applicable to any people who love and serve the Lord. Christianity does not make men miserable. It makes us *sons* of God, and what can a son need which his father will not freely supply? “Will God give all the happiness to his enemies, and reserve all the mourning for his own family? Shall his foes have mirth and joy, and shall his children inherit sorrow and wretchedness? Shall the sinner, who has no part in Christ, call himself rich in happiness, and shall we go mourning as if we were penniless beggars?” No, this cannot be. Christ’s church is his bride. Members of his body may suffer with the Head; but we shall be more than compensated with heavenly blessings. We get foretastes of our rich inheritance from the Spirit’s presence. Glimpses of the heavenly world cheer, and urge us onward. We are sure of support; we cannot sink, for “underneath are the everlasting arms.” Foes are without: fears are within; every earthly prop may fall away; but the arms of love and mercy are beneath, and will sustain us through life.

C. M. Arise, my soul, my joyful powers,
And triumph in my God;
Awake, my voice, and loud proclaim
His glorious grace abroad.

The arms of everlasting love
Beneath my soul he placed,
And on the Rock of Ages set
My slippery footsteps fast.

The city of my blest abode
Is walled around with grace;
Salvation for a bulwark stands
To shield the sacred place.

Arise, my soul; awake, my voice,
And tunes of pleasure sing;
Lord hallelujahs shall address
My Saviour and my King.

6 Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few.

7 And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou a help to him from his enemies.

8 And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

9 Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

10 They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.

11 Bless, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

12 And of Benjamin he said, The beloved

of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

13 And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

14 And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon,

15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

16 And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

17 His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

DEUTERONOMY, xxxiii. 6-17.

Wondrous are the blessings which God has in store for his people. Beyond all computation, by our mode of figuring, are the gifts held in reserve for his loving and obedient ones. The blessings announced were prophetic, but their future history has proved their correctness. As Israel said, when established in Canaan, "Not one of thy promises has failed," so these tribes could say. Reuben was to live and multiply; Judah was to be the lawgiver, and the Messiah was to come from this tribe to his people. Levi was chosen to the priesthood; Benjamin was the Lord's beloved; and his holy city, and holy temple in their midst, would be the place where his honor would dwell. Ephraim and Manasseh had an exceedingly large and rich portion, and Ephraim had always a controlling voice in the national councils. God's people are his portion, and it is his great delight to do large things for them. He gives with no stinted hand, and withholds no real good from his chosen ones. Are you one of the Lord's beloved ones? Then you are safe indeed, for you dwell in Christ. He will cover you in the day of heat and storm, when the tempest blows, or the battle rages. His feathers shall hide thee, his wings cover thee. Blessed retreat! what can be compared to it? Here we may be safe until God's wrath is past.

7s. They who on the Lord rely
Safely dwell, though danger's nigh;
Wide his sheltering wings are spread
O'er each faithful servant's head.

Vain temptation's wily snare;
Christians are Jehovah's care.
Harmless flies the shaft by day,
Or in darkness wings its way.

1 He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily.

2 For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine-branches.

3 The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir-trees shall be terribly shaken.

4 The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

5 He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared.

6 The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved.

7 And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts.

8 But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back.

9 Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture.

10 She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.

11 Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?

12 The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.

NAHUM, ii. 1-12.

The Lord is slow to anger: but when once his wrath is stirred up, he is fearful in his judgments. He is slow to anger, because he is great in power. "God's rod of mercy is ever in his hand outstretched; his sword of justice in its scabbard, held down by that pierced hand of love which bled for the sins of men." But he is a jealous God,—he is jealous lest his people should be robbed of their rights. His heart yearns over them; he will allow none to injure them. Nineveh had sought to do this. She had been a proud and haughty oppressor, filling to the brim her cup of iniquity. At length God arises in his great power, and smites her to the earth, bringing down her haughty spirit into the dust. He leaves her empty, and void, and waste; with a melted heart, smiting knees, and fears of blackness. Only a few centuries after Nahum had predicted her destruction, the ruin was so complete that the very site of the city was unknown. Thus will it be with those who despise God, and abuse his people. It is a fearful thing to incur his displeasure. He is as true to his threatenings as to his promises. Let us not be among his enemies, for none can stand before his wrath. A fearful doom awaits all who oppose him.

7s. Haste, O sinner; now be wise;
Stay not for the morrow's sun;
Wisdom if you still despise,
Harder is it to be won.

Haste, and mercy now implore;
Stay not for the morrow's sun,
Lest thy season should be o'er
Ere this evening's stage be run.

Haste, O sinner; now return;
Stay not for the morrow's sun,
Lest thy lamp should cease to burn
Ere salvation's work is done.

Haste, O sinner; now be blest;
Stay not for the morrow's sun,
Lest perdition thee arrest
Ere the morrow is begun.

1 Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

4 Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

6 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

10 Afterward I came unto the house of

Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabbel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.

11 And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. **NEHEMIAH, vi. 1-5, 9-15.**

God's people have great need of wisdom, prudence, and courage. All eyes are on them; every effort will be made to turn them aside from doing God's work. Plots will be made, snares set, and if they are not wise they will be caught, and, if not wholly ruined, the work of the Lord will be hindered. "Be ye wise as serpents," said he who knew better than we the dangers which beset us. We should let no specious pretext take us from our duty, and especially when we have some work on hand that is of great moment. Our enemies will exercise all their cunning, inventing excuses to draw us off: our safety lies in absolute refusal to turn aside for any reason. We need courage also. The bold and brave win. We must remember that we are immortal until our work is done; therefore no harm can come to us while we are in the way of duty. When our work is done, the sooner we die the better. We must be careful of our example. We know not who is looking to us, following our footsteps, confidently trusting that we will lead them aright. If they see us fearful or doubtful, they will become so, and immense mischief will arise. Look to God for guidance, fearlessly walk the path of duty, and rest assured God will take care of you, and give success to your work.

S. M. My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

O, watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
Thy arduous work will not be done
Till thou obtain thy crown.

Fight on, my soul, till death
Shall bring thee to thy God;
He'll take thee, at thy parting breath,
To his divine abode.

3 I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.

4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits:

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me

8 I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9 So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor: and this was my portion of all my labor.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

12 And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.

13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14 The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.

ECCLESIASTES, ii. 3-15.

No man was ever in better position to find happiness in earthly things than Solomon. Not a selfish desire but he could gratify, and he gave loose rein to every appetite and passion. With his unlimited advantages, he sought happiness in sensual pleasure, luxury, and splendor. His comment is one of the saddest phrases that ever escaped human lips. "Vanity of vanities," utter vanity. Our selection shows us the various ways in which this highly favored man sought to satisfy the cravings of an immortal spirit. How utterly he failed, let his own sad, sad words truly tell. What can the man do that comes after the king? If he could not find happiness in any of these ways, how can any one ever hope to do so? What advantage, or ground of hope can any one have which he did not possess? Surely none. From the unsatisfied heart of this man — more favored in all respects than any man that ever lived — come the words which should touch every heart, and be an exhortation ever ringing in the ears, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and obedience to his law is the only source of true happiness. If you are wise, you will seek in the service of Christ to satisfy the cravings of your soul. A greater than Solomon has told us, that in Christ alone can we find rest from earth's weary labors and heavy burdens.

C. M. My soul forsakes her vain delight,
And bids the world farewell;
On things of sense why fix my sight?
Why on its pleasures dwell?

There's nothing round this spacious earth
That suits my soul's desire;
To boundless joy and solid mirth
My nobler thoughts aspire.

No longer will I ask its love,
Nor seek its friendship more;
The happiness that I approve
Is not within its power.

O for the pinions of a dove,
To ascend the heavenly road:
There shall I share my Saviour's love;
There shall I dwell with God.

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark; for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening, and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoe'er creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.

21 And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.

22 While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease

GENESIS, viii. 6-22.

“Go forth of the ark,” said the same voice which had called Noah to enter it. Leaving his refuge, the patriarch stood on the grave of a buried world. The riot-house of evil had become a noiseless solitude. “He read in one vast ruin the epitaph of sin.” It was an eventful moment in Noah’s life. What shall be his first act? “Noah builded an altar unto the Lord.” Not that he had nothing else to do. “He was houseless. There was no fold for the herds. He had all to do; and all demanded thought and plan.” Surely so many cares and so much work will excuse him from thinking of religion and worship. No, indeed. “All shall yield to him who is above all. He who is best shall have the best. The earth’s first building is an altar to its Maker. Noah’s first posture is the bended knee and the uplifted hand.” Shall we not find instruction here? How easy to plead a pressure of earthly cares as an excuse for the neglect of God! We are so full of business, we have no time for gathering about the family altar. This act of Noah ought to make us blush for shame. Luther, on the busiest days of his most busy life, said he must have *three hours* for prayer, and we cannot find a few moments in the morning and evening.

S. M. O, cease, my wandering soul,
On restless wing to roam;
All this wide world, to either pole,
Has not for thee a home.

Behold the ark of God;
Behold the open door;
O, haste to gain that dear abode,
And rove, my soul, no more.

1 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rearward with Achish.

3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?

4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?

5 Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

6 Then Achish called David, and said unto

him, Surely, as the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favor thee not.

7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

11 So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

1 SAMUEL, xxix. 1-11.

In a fit of despondency, David went over to the Philistines. At Ziklag, he and his men with their families lived for months. There is no vindicating David for this; not even a plausible excuse for him. It is natural and easy to say, some allowance should be made for the circumstances in which he was placed. But we are not wholly the creatures of circumstances. We often create them. Who put David into these circumstances? Why should he have gone to Achish? It was wrong. One sin cannot palliate for another. David had lost his confidence in God, and ran away from duty. And what a life he must have led! How false, at least, in appearance! He thought of his own interest, rather than God's glory. From that sin of unbelief sprang a prolific progeny of other sins, making this a dark chapter in his history. Here he is, enrolled among the enemies of his country, marching under a hostile flag, apparently to fight his own people. If he does not fight bravely, he will be charged with cowardice and treachery. If he does engage in the battle, he will be called a traitor, and unfit to wear the crown. But God wrought a deliverance for him, and saved him from all this. O, the restraining grace of God! How grateful we ought to be for it!

L. M. O Thou that hear'st when sinners cry,
Though all my crimes before thee lie,
Behold them not with angry look,
But blot their memory from thy book.

Create my nature pure within,
And form my soul averse to sin;
Let thy good Spirit ne'er depart,
Nor hide thy presence from my heart.

I cannot live without thy light,
Cast out and banished from thy sight;
Thy holy joys, my God, restore,
And guard me, that I fall no more.

Though I have grieved thy Spirit, Lord,
His help and comfort still afford,
And let a wretch come near thy throne,
To plead the merits of thy Son.

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. *GALATIANS, iii. 1-10.*

Paul had great affection for those led to Christ by his ministry. He watched them carefully, and tried to shield them from the snares set by wicked men. Wherever he went, Judaizing teachers rose up to turn away the converts from simple faith in Christ. In his absence they did much mischief,—disturbing the converts' minds, destroying their peace, and shaking their faith. Zeal is a good thing, if it be wisely directed and constant.

Paul illustrates his argument for their adherence to simple faith in Christ, by an incident in the Mosaic writings. Ishmael was born under the law, yet was excluded from spiritual blessings. Isaac was born under the promise of faith, and inherited all the spiritual privileges. In Hagar and Sarah we have the picture of the two covenants, and in their sons, the two classes of people,—the bond and the free. The earthly Jerusalem is in bondage; but the heavenly is free. All lines of the promises are free. If we are Christ's, we are citizens of heaven. The salvation which is offered in Christ is perfect, and it frees from the bondage of the law. Are we free in Christ, let us use our liberty, and rejoice in it. Let nothing tempt us to any other reliance except Christ. He is an all-sufficient Saviour, and if we have committed the care of our souls to him, we should bid farewell to all fears.

C. M. Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
It pierces through the veil of sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of twings a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the world was made
By God's almighty word;
We know the heavens and earth shall fade,
And be again restored.

Abrah'm obeyed the Lord's command,
From his own country driven;
By faith he sought a promised land,
But found his rest in heaven.

1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son: and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements,

whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I hear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

GALATIANS, iv. 1-17.

Paul was familiar with Roman law, which made the power of the father absolute during the son's minority, so that there was no difference, legally, in the minor's position and that of the servant. In Roman families, tutors were employed to look after the child's person and habits, and governors to take charge of the property. Christ sets all believers free from bondage. So perfect is this freedom, so truly are we made sons, that his spirit within us leads us to cry, "Abba, Father." Shall some give up their high privilege, and go back into the servant's position of drudgery and bondage? Yet all who seek to save themselves by the works of the law do this foolish thing. It was hard for the apostle to say these things, but he shows his sincere love for them thereby. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." There are suggestive lessons here for us. We trust in Christ for salvation, but how little joy and peace we have because our trust is so weak. If we trusted perfectly, then our joy would be like the overflowing fountain; our peace like the flow of the full river; and we should exult in our liberty as the sons of God. We are to maintain good works, but they have nothing to do with our title of sons. Children of the heavenly King have no right to the slavish spirit, nor should they feel weak and poor when the rich treasury of grace is open to them.

C. M. Thou Lord of all the worlds on high,
Allow my humble claim;
Nor, while a child would raise its cry,
Disdain a Father's name.

My Father, God, how sweet the sound!
How tender and how dear!
Not all the melody of heaven
Could so delight the ear.

Come, sacred Spirit, seal the name
On my believing heart,
And show that in Jehovah's grace
I share a filial part.

By such a heavenly signal cheered,
Unwavering, I believe,
And Abba, Father, humbly cry;
Nor can the sign deceive.

5 And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God,

6 And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.

7 Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is to this day.

8 And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

9 For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

10 And now, O our God, what shall we

say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments.

11 Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end, to another with their uncleanness.

12 Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever.

13 And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this;

14 Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?

15 O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous; for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

EZRA, ix. 5-15.

When Ezra came to Jerusalem there was apparent prosperity on all hands. Peace reigned throughout Israel's borders; the temple had been repaired, and the service established. Though the numbers were few, yet the prospect was improving. But he was soon shocked by the sin into which the people had fallen. The law of God in regard to mingling with the people of the land, and especially of intermarriage, was utterly disregarded by all classes. Ezra was deeply affected, exhibited all the signs of deep grief, and went up to the temple and poured forth his sorrow in this heartfelt confession. Their sins caused him to blush for shame. It had been a crying sin in Israel from the first, and God had sorely punished them. But a few were permitted to return, and they have fallen into the same evil thing. Ezra's confession seems like a prolonged wail of sadness, so deeply was he moved to think that, notwithstanding God's sparing mercy, they were so soon breaking his commandments. But he had hope in the fact that God was righteous and merciful. Surely that is the only ground of hope. If God were just only, how should we escape? There would be no help for us. We do well to confess our sins, and cast ourselves on the mercy of God. Our confession should be full, free, hearty. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

7s. God of mercy, God of grace,
Hear our sad, repentant songs,
O, restore thy suppliant race,
Thou, to whom our praise belongs.

5

Deep regret for follies past,
Talents wasted, time misspent;
Hearts debased by worldly cares,
Thankless for the blessings lent.

1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require: at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of

every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

GENESIS, ix. 1-17.

How beautiful is the rainbow! It has a charm for every eye. "Its lovely hues proclaim that the gloom is past. It spans the clouds as the fair herald of returning clearness. Its noble form, its various shades of distinct and blended color, surpass all praise. It worthily magnifies its Maker." God entered into covenant with Noah, promising and pledging himself not again to flood the earth. God appointed the bow as the sure token. "There the bow is the brilliant signet on God's preserving arm; it is the golden impress by which he ratifies the covenant." This rainbow is typical of our Lord Jesus, who is God's witness. It tells his people, that though God may forsake them for a little season, and in a little wrath, yet he will not forget them. The rainbow is seen when most it is needed, and Jesus appears the most lovely when we need him most. We must have rain in order to see the bow. When peace is gone, and storms and fears are over the soul, and we seem likely to be overwhelmed, then Jesus comes forth in all his holiness and beauty, to tell us that the storm is overpast. "God's rainbow is hung over the cloud of our sins, our sorrows, our woes, to prophesy deliverance." Have we entered into covenant relations with God? Then we may trace the bow in every time of trial.

S. H. M. Faith is the rainbow's form
Hung on the brow of heaven,
The glory of the passing storm,
The pledge of mercy given;
It is the bright, triumphal arch,
Through which the saints to glory march.

The faith that works by love,
And purifies the heart,
A foretaste of the joys above
To mortals can impart;
It bears us through this earthly strife,
And triumphs in immortal life.

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

HEBREWS, xi. 1-13.

As salvation depends on faith, we may well ask, "What is faith?" "Faith is a persuasion of the mind resting upon evidence. A full persuasion of things not seen." We may look into the heavens and see no star; but looking through the telescope, we see many bright orbs. The natural man sees no God, no Saviour; but the eye of faith sees God in all his works, and the Saviour in the gospel scheme. The patriarchs believed in an unseen God, and obtained a good report. Abel believed and obeyed God, and his faith is still speaking. God is pleased with those who trust him. Enoch did this, walked with God, and escaped natural death. In reverent forethought Noah built the ark, and his provident faith condemns unbelievers. Faith produced obedience in Abraham, leading him to look to the hour when his tent life should be exchanged for the city of the Living God. These all died in faith, because they had lived in faith. They saw no fulfillment of the promises, but were persuaded of them, and greeted them as the weary traveller his long-sought home. "He died in faith," is the true epitaph for every saint. It matters little how else one dies, violently or peacefully, only so his dying eye is faith-lit. Faith comforts, supports, guides in life, and is a sweet strain with which to enter the heavenly city. Let us live in faith, and we shall die in faith, and all the future will be blessed reality.

S. H. M. Faith is the Christian's prop

Whereon his sorrows lean;

It is the substance of his hope,

His proof of things unseen;

It is the anchor of his soul,

When tempests rage and billows roll.

Faith is the polar star

That guides the Christian's way,

Directs his wanderings from afar

To realms of endless day;

It points the course, where'er he roams,

And safely leads the pilgrim home.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He

that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

JOHN, i. 6-23.

The incarnation of the Son of God for man's salvation is the central thought of the Bible. In Jesus Christ there was a perfect union of the human and divine. He came to reveal the Father to lost men. He exhibited the holiness of the law, and honored its precepts with a perfect obedience, and on all receiving him he confers the power of becoming sons of God. The Son of God became a man, that the sons of men might become the sons of God. Royal is this gift; such as Deity alone could bestow. "It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." What a fullness is this! The stream of grace is ever flowing, and yet the fountain springs up as free, as rich, as full as ever. Here all our needs may be supplied. "I want none beside him. In life, he is my life; and in death, he shall be the death of death: in poverty, Christ is my riches; in sickness, he makes my bed; in darkness, he is my star; and in brightness he is my sun. He is the manna of the camp in the wilderness, and he shall be the new corn of the host when they come to Canaan. Jesus is to me all grace, and no wrath; all truth, and no falsehood; and of truth and grace he is full, infinitely full." Dear reader, have you received Jesus, and become a son or daughter of the Almighty? How strange to refuse such a gift!

S. M. Behold the Prince of Peace,
The chosen of the Lord,
God's well-beloved Son, fulfills
The sure, prophetic word.

No royal pomp adorns
This King of righteousness;
And meekness, patience, truth, and love,
Compose his princely dress.

1 So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.

3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:

4 For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bond-women, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

5 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?

6 And Esther said, The adversary and en-

emy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

7 And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

8 Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9 And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

ESTHER, vii. 1-10.

We cannot avoid the feeling of satisfaction at the justice which overtook Haman. He was a vain, wicked man. His pride was his ruin. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Angry because one man refused him homage, though multitudes did him obeisance, he plots the destruction of thousands of innocents. But a just God had his eye upon him, and would allow no harm to be done by him to his chosen people. God will turn the ways of the wicked upside down. He may allow them to go a long time, but retribution will overtake them at length. The wicked may be in great prosperity, and thus continue for years; but God keeps a record, and like the rich man of the parable, their doom will come. Riches go, honor goes, friends turn into enemies, sickness and death often follow each other in quick succession. The enemies of God's people are his enemies, and how fearful is God as an enemy! What power! He will take his own time, his own way; but his righteous judgments will sooner or later come on all his enemies. My soul, be not numbered among the enemies of God. Who can measure the difference between God as a friend and as an enemy? He will take care of his people; he will destroy his enemies.

C. M. "I'll go to Jesus, though my sin,
Hath like a mountain rose;
I know his courts; I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

"I'll to the gracious King approach,
Whose sceptre pardon gives;
Perhaps he may command my touch,
And then the suppliant lives.

"Perhaps he will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer.
But, if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

"I can but perish if I go;
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die."

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that Judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

7 To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life:

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile,

10 But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

15 Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another;)

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

ROMANS, ii. 1-16.

In nothing does the deceitfulness of the human heart manifest itself more strikingly than in its judgments of itself and others. Men will excuse themselves for doing what they are very ready to condemn in another. But God is just; his judgments are not affected, as man's are, by ignorance or partiality. He will render to every man according to his deeds. It is our real character which God looks at. He will judge us by what we *are*: our nation, or church, or family connections, will furnish no refuge. God's goodness and forbearance are manifested in sparing our lives; are we abusing that long-suffering by continuing in sin? Be sure it is only aggravating our condemnation. There is salvation for those only, who, trusting in Jesus, are renewed by divine grace, and walk in the ways of righteousness and holiness. Every hope is false which makes us feel secure while continuing in sin. Since God is just, his wrath cannot be evaded except in the way he has appointed,—faith in Christ crucified. Having no righteousness of our own, we must be partakers of Christ's. We shall be judged by the light we have had. The heathen, having no written law, will be judged by conscience; but we, who have the law, will be judged by its precepts. Jesus, who died for sinners, will be the Judge. Alas for those who reject him now!

I. M. Weeping will not save thee:

Though thy face were bathed in tears,
That could not allay thy fears,
Could not wash the sins of years:
Weeping will not save thee.

CHORUS.—Jesus wept and died for thee, &c.

Working will not save thee:

Purest deeds that you can do,
Holiest thoughts and feelings, too,
Cannot form thy soul anew:

Working will not save thee.

CHORUS.—Jesus wept and died for thee, &c.

6 Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.

7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

9 Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

11 Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any god or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be

cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake, and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. DAN. vi. 6-17.

Daniel was a favorite of this king, and hence the envy and malice of those who wanted his place. It is more than probable that he would not countenance their wicked schemes to enrich themselves from the king's treasury. "For every right work a man is envied of his neighbor." The spics could find no fault in him. We should remember that many eyes are upon us; do they see nothing wrong? They procured the enactment of a most wicked law concerning the worship of his God. Ah, Daniel! you are caught now. You will not be foolish enough to endanger your life by breaking this law? Think what you can do for your exiled brethren, while in your position. If you must pray, go into some closet, and shut your door, and whisper your prayer. God can hear your whisper. So speaks worldly prudence in his ear. What cares he for human laws when they conflict with a higher law? The law of his God is to be kept. He whisper a prayer in some dark closet, for fear of man? No! the usual place, with an open window toward Jerusalem, where his enemies can see and hear him, if they choose, is the only place where his God will regard him now. How noble! My soul, what would you have done? Are you afraid to confess Christ before men? Remember Daniel.

C. M. O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe!

A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That, when in danger, knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt;

That bears, unmoved, the world's dread frown,
Nor heeds its scornful smile;
That seas of trouble cannot drown,
Nor Satan's arts beguile;

A faith that keeps the narrow way
Till life's last hour is fled,
And with a pure and heavenly ray
Lights up a dying-bed.

1 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof;

7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

8 Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,

10 And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors,

11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but

no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

12 Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know his place;

13 That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

14 It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment.

15 And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.

16 Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

17 Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

18 Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

19 Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof,

20 That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof? *JOB, xxxviii. 1-20.*

The question which God put to Job was well calculated to show him his great ignorance. What knew he of light and darkness; of snow and hail? Modern science boasts of its great discoveries, and we rejoice that it has made many discoveries and wrought much good; yet, after admitting all, it is to be confessed that it has only advanced our knowledge a few steps farther, and then we are met by questions as difficult as any already solved. Having satisfied Job that he knew but little, God shows him his weakness, his helplessness. Since he can do but little, it is folly to oppose or contend with God. He calls on him to consider what great things he does. He holds the universe in his hands, and doeth his pleasure with all things. The rain, the frost, the snow, the ice, the thunder, the lightning, the stars, all do his bidding. He sends them where it pleaseth him; he feedeth the beasts and the birds. Has man any control of any of these things? It would be appalling to be in the hands of such a being, if he were not wise and good; but since he is, we rejoice in his power and his omniscience. What reasons do we find here for becoming his willing children, in the way he commands, through faith in his Son! Then all his power and wisdom will be directed to promoting our higher well-being for time and eternity.

C. M. 'Twas God who fixed the rolling spheres,

And stretched the boundless skies,
Who formed the plan of endless years,
And bade the ages rise.

From everlasting is his might,
Immense and unconfined;
He pierces through the realms of light,
And rides upon the wind.

He darts along the burning sky,
Loud thunders round him roar;
Through worlds above his terrors fly,
While worlds below adore.

He speaks: great nature's wheels stand still,
And leave their wasted round;
The mountains melt; each trembling hill
Forsakes its ancient bound.

7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords : and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

8 And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;

9 And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token:

13 And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

14 And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

16 And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way.

17 And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear.

18 Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

19 And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.

20 And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

21 And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not. *JOSHUA, ii. 7-22.*

There was safety for Rahab and her house, on condition of her binding the scarlet thread in the window. If she had neglected it, she would have been involved in the common ruin. There is much instruction for us here. This scarlet thread runs through the Bible. From Abel's slain lambs, to Calvary's cross, we read much of blood. It was blood that sheltered Israel's first-born, the Passover night. Under the Mosaic law, nearly everything was cleansed with blood, and without its shedding there is no remission of sin. This scarlet thread there symbolizes the blood of Jesus, which cleanses from all sin. There is no salvation except by the blood of Christ. Are we trusting in this? It was a very simple thing for Rahab to tie that cord in her window. Having done this, she felt perfectly safe, because she believed the word of the spies. Her peace was undisturbed by the shout of mighty hosts, or the rocking and falling of the city's walls. So if we have come to the fountain, and washed in the cleansing blood, we have only to believe, and our peace will not be destroyed. The scarlet thread proved a perfect security to Rahab: her house did not fall; she and hers were saved. It will be so with *all* whose sins are under the blood of Jesus.

S. M. Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

8

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

MATTHEW, xxvi. 36-46.

43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

MARK, xiv. 43-46.

What a sight for men or angels to behold! The Son of God on the cold ground three hours, covered with bloody sweat, pleading in agony, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," and yet, "Thy will be done." O how bitter is the cup of divine wrath! Three times the red cup of wrath is put to the lips of Jesus, and he each time asking, that, if possible, it may pass from him. If this was "done in a green tree, what will be done in the dry?" If *Christ* found it so terrible to drink this cup, how will it be with the *sinner* who so justly deserves it? "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." What a terrible thing to be a sinner, or to be in the sinner's place! No wonder all heaven is stirred, and the harps of God attuned anew, when even one sinner, sorry for his sins, is rescued from going to perdition. But Jesus triumphed. He led the captive devil, captive. All is safe in his hands. Judas, you do not need clubs and soldiers; this is your hour. You can have me now. I have received the needed strength for the terrible cross. Father, forgive my murderers, save them if possible. This was the essence of all love. "God so loved the world."

L. M. "Tis midnight; and on Olive's brow
The star is dimmed that lately shone;
"Tis midnight; in the garden, now,
The suffering Saviour prays alone.
"Tis midnight; and, from all removed,
The Saviour wrestles lone, with fears;
E'en that disciple whom he loved
Heeds not his Master's grief and tears.

"Tis midnight; and for others' guilt
The man of sorrows weeps in blood;
Yet he that hath in anguish knelt
Is not forsaken by his God.
"Tis midnight; and from ether plains
Is borne the song that angels know;
Unheard by mortals are the strains
That sweetly soothe the Saviour's woe.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

2 Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures,

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you,

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. ROM. i. 1-17.

Instead of being ashamed, Paul gloried in the gospel's divine origin, proof of which was abundantly manifested in its saving power. It was adapted to all mankind, and was given upon the exercise of simple faith, so all might possess it. Our Lord's perfect obedience unto death, vindicated and honored the law, and shows God to be holy and just, while he justifies sinners who trust in Jesus. This is the goodness that Paul longed to tell in Rome. He would make known God's grace and favor, which is the source of all peace and blessing. We do not wonder that Paul loved to preach such truths; that he felt himself debtor to publish the gospel to all the world. If there be any salvation or hope for man, it is here. Realizing, as we must, the needs of lost men, we should be fired with this apostolic zeal. Paul had no reason to be ashamed of this gospel. He gloried in it; do we? Why should any Christian be ashamed to look, speak, and act, as though — believing all are lost, and only God's grace can save them — this grace alone can give him power to conquer sin, resist temptation, and know the truth? Yet, are not many Christians acting as though ashamed? Would that we all had Paul's loving heart, consuming itself with desire to tell of Jesus!

S. M. Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And gird your armor on.
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through his eternal Son.

Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in his mighty power,
The man who in the Saviour trusts
Is more than conqueror.

Stand, then, in his great might,
With all his strength endued,
And take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God: —

That, having all things done,
And all your conflicts past,
You may o'ercome through Christ alone,
And stand complete at last.

2 O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

3 God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

4 And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.

5 Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet.

6 He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

8 Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation?

9 Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.

11 The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear.

12 Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.

13 Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.

14 Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages: they came out as a whirlwind to scatter me: their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly.

15 Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, through the heap of great waters.

16 When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops.

HABAKKUK, iii. 2-16.

The burden of this prayer we have been reading is a revival of God's work. The prophet here refers to some things God had done in other days, to encourage our faith in asking him to revive his work now. God came from Teman and Mount Paran. "The earth was full of his praise." God had horses and chariots of salvation, and rode on them. Mountains of difficulties, and overflowing waters, trembled and passed away with God's coming. He has the means and power to revive his work. In a revival he marches through the land, a mighty conqueror. Inanimate nature becomes a friendly auxiliary to the work. The sun stood still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, to assist Joshua and his army; and so in all places and ages "the earth helps the woman," [the church.] Even now God uses the railroads, the lines of steamers, and telegraph wires to promote his great cause. All the improvements of the age are working for the revival of God's work and the extension of our Saviour's reign on earth. There may be great depressions in business; the fig-tree not even blossom; the herd gone from the stall; and men's hearts failing from fear: yet God is advancing his glory and extending the Messiah's reign through it all. Let us then say with confidence, "O Lord, revive thy work!"

We praise thee, O God, for the Son of thy love,
For Jesus who died, and is now gone above.

Cno.—Hallelujah! thine the glory! Hal-

lelujah! amen.

Hallelujah! thine the glory! revive
us again.

We praise thee, O God, for thy Spirit of light,
Who has shown us our Saviour, and scattered our night. CHORUS.

All glory and praise to the Lamb that was slain,
Who has borne all our sins, and cleared every stain. CHORUS.

15 In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold incircumcised.

16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?

18 Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

20 So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then I testified against them, and said

unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.

22 And I commanded the Levites, that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

NEHEMIAH, xiii. 15-22.

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.

14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

EXODUS, xxxi. 13-16.

Sabbath profanation is a fearful sin, and will certainly bring God's curse upon the nation, community, family, or individual who is guilty of it. It is a direct insult to God's wisdom and goodness. He rested himself, even from a holy, great, and good work, to sanction by his example the requirement he made of his people. It is one of the sad features of our times that there is so much looseness on this subject. In God's word there is great strictness, and some of the richest promises are made to those who honor his holy day; while some of its most fearful curses are pronounced against those who profane it. There can be no question that the growing laxity of professed Christians is tending to serious evils. He cannot honor God, who dishonors his laws, or breaks his Sabbath. "Through the week we go down into the valleys of care and shadow. Our Sabbaths should be hills of light and joy in God's presence; and so, as time rolls by, we shall go on from mountain-top to mountain-top, till at last we catch the glory of the gate, and enter in to go no more out forever." If we would make the greatest attainments in holiness, we must do as God has directed.

L. M. This day the Lord hath called his own;
O let us, then, his praise declare,
Fix our desires on him alone,
And seek his face with fervent prayer.

Now let the world's delusive things
No more our grovelling thoughts employ,
But Faith be taught to stretch her wings
In search of heav'n's unfailing joy.

1 It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other besides the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi.

3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.

5 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court,

6 And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

7 Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy

people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?

8 And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

9 If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

10 And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab, and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not,

11 Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

12 O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee.

13 And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

2 CHRONICLES, xx. 1-13.

We have a good example in this selection of what a ruler should do when enemies threaten destruction to his people. A solemn fast is proclaimed, that the people may humble themselves before God. Jehoshaphat not only fasted, but cried unto God; his prayer was remarkable. He acknowledges the sovereign dominion of the divine providence, and finds comfort in it. He pleads their covenant relation, for he is the God of their fathers. He pleads their indisputable title to the land, for God gave it to them. He reminds God of that temple where he had promised to hear their cries for help. He sets forth the ingratitude and injustice of their enemies. They are rendering us evil for good. Jehoshaphat pleads his dependence on God. He had a well-disciplined army, and expected to use it; but he knows that without the blessing of God he shall fail. This action and prayer has its lesson for us. We are brought into many strait places, and happy are we if we can look to God for help. We shall find him a strong tower into which we may run and be safe; a shield in the day of battle; a mighty helper in the hour of need. We do well to study this prayer, and use the same arguments which proved so successful in this instance. Our God is a wonder-worker indeed, and he is ever ready to respond to the prayer of faith.

L. M. Great Maker of unnumbered worlds,
And whom unnumbered worlds adore,—
Whose goodness all thy creatures share,
While nature trembles at thy power,—

Thine is the hand that moves the spheres,
That wakes the wind, and lifts the sea,
And man, who moves the lord of earth,
Acts but the part assigned by thee.

While suppliant crowds implore thine aid,
To thee we raise the humble cry;
Thine altar is the contrite heart,
Thine incense the repentant sigh.

O, may our land, in this her hour,
Confess thy hand, and bless the rod,
By penitence make thee her Friend,
And find in thee a guardian God.

1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

PSALMS, xlii. 1-11.

1 O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

2 For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.

3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

4 He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

5 God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

7 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

8 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

9 The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.

PSALMS, xvii. 1-9.

What a gracious provision the cities of refuge were in Israel! Prominent objects of sight, on carefully prepared roads, well marked out by guide-boards. God has something better for his saints: he is *himself* the refuge of his people. They have nothing to fear: the earth may quake; nature may be in terrible convulsions; waters swelling, and mountains shaking. But the child of God from his place of safety may look on calmly and undisturbed. Then God is a *present* help in trouble. We have no pilgrimage to go on to find him; no hard race to reach him in time; but a present help, just when you want him. So his people have ever found him. It is not strange that Luther, in the troublesome times in which he lived, found great comfort in this psalm. The peace of a saint is like the steady flow of a majestic river. The streams of grace make glad his heart, and he is unmoved. Christ is full of sympathy and love; do we tell him each rising grief? He is our strength; do we go to him when we are weak? Why not lean on him? He has a robe of righteousness for us; why not wear it? All that he has is ours, if we will only use it. Away with our fears! They are not suitable indulgences for the saint of God. He should feast on the peace of God, the joy of the Lord, and grow strong thereby

L. M. God is the refuge of his saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade;
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold him present with his aid.
Loud may the troubled ocean roar;
In sacred peace our souls abide,
While every nation, every shore
Trowbles, and dreads the swelling tide.

There is a stream whose gentle flow
Supplies the city of our God;
Life, love, and joy still gliding through,
And watering our divine abode.
That sacred stream, thine holy word,
Supports our faith, our fear controls;
Sweet peace thy promises afford,
And give new strength to fair ing souls.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better country; that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying,

blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of I'pha-iach's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

HEBREWS, xi. 14-27.

Every child of God is a pilgrim on earth. It is not his home. He looks forward with fond anticipation and earnest longing to his fatherland: he is a stranger here. There is a better land where his Father has a city and a mansion prepared for him. Firm in faith, he endures the hardest trials, gives up idolized sons, sure that the faithful promises will make all good. Faith sees not as sense sees; but, contrary to precedent, blesses the elder, instead of the younger. It grasps a promise, though distant, and speaks of it as certain. Faith chooses to suffer affliction with God's chosen ones, rather than the fleeting pleasures of the earth, having regard to the reward. This cloud of witnesses died in faith. They were confident of their acceptance with God, and rested in his faithfulness. To them the pains of death were but the birth-pangs of a better state. Their course was one of faith; sight they had not. The brightest and best of earth have walked faith's pathway. This was the orbit in which these stars of the first magnitude moved, all the time of their shining here. This life of faith has its trials and afflictions; but it leads to joys on high: also we rest in our trials and toil now. Its dark night ends in eternal day. Have you this like precious faith?

C. M. Give me the wings of faith, to rise

Within the vail, and see

The saints above - how great their joys,
How bright their glories be!

Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears.

I ask them whence their victory came,
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to his death.

They marked the footstamps that he trod,
His zeal inspired their breast;
And following their incarnate God,
Possess the promise I rest.

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me besido the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

5 The Lord is the portion of mine inheri-

tance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

PSALMS, xxiii. 1-6.

This gem of poetry springs from the personal experience of David. It is God's loving care of him that makes his heart overflow. We see God as a shepherd, coming for his sheep, and then as host, feeding his guests. Still waters speak of rest and refreshment for the weary and faint, that they may be guided to walk in ways of righteousness. God intends all our enjoyments shall prepare us for usefulness. We are "created in Christ Jesus for good works." To this, protection is added. The valley of the shadow of death is before us, but we fear it not when the Shepherd guides, and his voice cheers. The same thought is repeated when God, as host, provides food for the journey and conflict. Happy the man who can say, "The Lord is *my* Shepherd." He cares for me; sees that I have food, rest, and comfort. He is my supply and defence, so that I shall want nothing, nor fear anything. Can we truly say this? Then we may be happy and peaceful. We need not fear poverty. God can give us in poverty a greater abundance than the rich have. Do we think of failing bodily powers, sickness and pain? He can make our bed a throne. Is death before us? It cannot stop the music in our soul.

11s. The Lord is my Shepherd; no want shall I know;

I feed in green pastures, safe folded to rest; He leadeth my soul where the still waters flow, Restores me when wandering, redeems when oppressed.

Through the valley and shadow of death though I stray,

Since thou art my Guardian, no evil I fear; Thy rod shall defend me, thy staff be my stay; No harm can befall with my Comforter near.

In the midst of affliction my table is spread; With blessings unmeasured my cup runneth o'er; With oil and perfume thou anointest my head; O, what shall I ask of thy providence more?

Let goodness and mercy, my bountiful God, Still follow my steps till I meet thee above; I seek, by the path which my forefathers trod, Through the land of their sojourn, thy kingdom of love.

4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

9 Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.

11 Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

12 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

14 We took sweet counsel together, and

walked unto the house of God in company.

15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.

17 Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice.

18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.

19 God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

20 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant.

21 The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

22 Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. *PSALMS, lv. 4-22.*

There is much of painful human experience expressed here. Our enemies reproach us; our intimate friends turn against us. We could bear the reproaches of enemies, but when those with whom we had taken sweet counsel lift up the heel against us, our cup seems to run over, and we would gladly fly away and be at rest. Like Elijah, we are ready to say, "It is enough; let me die." There are trying experiences in store for every soul. What shall we do? Long for death? Nay! we must look to Jesus, and remember that his earthly experience has fitted him to sympathize with, and succor us. It is not improbable that the Spirit referred to Judas in the familiar friend. Where such treachery as our Lord endured from him? We must cast our burdens on the Lord. We need not expect him always to take them away, but give us strength to bear them. We have no right to harbor anxious care. It is sinful, distrusting God; it is seeking to do for ourselves what he has promised to do for us. He will not forget anything; he knows all our needs. Anxiety will make us doubt his loving-kindness, and lead to many grievous sins. Let us trust God's promises; stop groaning, and believe. We may need burdens: we might be weaklings without them. God will see that they are not too heavy. He will sustain.

C. M. Still on the Lord thy burden roll,
Nor let a care remain;
His mighty arm shall bare thy soul,
And all thy griefs sustain

Ne'er will the Lord his aid deny
To those who trust his love:
The men who on his grace rely,
Nor earth nor hell shall move.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Agains' thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in in I did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

PSALMS, li. 1-19.

David had fearfully sinned. Nathan's words, "Thou art the man," was the sword which the Holy Spirit had used to lay bare his sin, and bring to light his guilt. When he saw his sin, mercy was his only plea. His confession was humble, hearty; no palliation, no hiding. "He that covereth his sin shall not prosper." He confesses the justice of God in his condemnation, but asks for mercy. He longs for cleansing and purity, as well as forgiveness, that he may be able to teach others. He plainly names his sin. Before God he was a convicted murderer, and so he calls his sin by its right name. It is hard for men to be strictly honest with God. They are wont to give fair names to foul sins. It is not enough to confess ourselves sinners; we must name special sins; call them what God sees them to be. We must feel their meaning also; we never can find forgiveness until we realize that sin deserves God's wrath. David's joy was gone; his mouth was effectually shut; he had not a word to say to others; he could only weep and cry for his lost joy. He did not ask to have salvation, or his hopes restored, for he had them; but he longs for the *joy* of salvation. Then when his heart was joyful, he could teach others; they would turn to God. Dear reader, has the dark cloud of sin shadowed you; driven away your happiness, so that you have not a word for Jesus? Penitence, confession, and prayer will bring back your joy.

S. M. Against thee, Lord, alone,
And only in thy sight,
Have I transgressed: and, though condemned,
Must own thy judgments right.

Blot out my crying sins,
Nor me in anger view;
Create in me a heart that's clean
An upright mind renew

1 But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.

2 And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.

4 Hear, O our God; for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:

5 And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

7 But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,

8 And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

NEHEMIAH, IV. 1-12.

The conduct of Nehemiah is exceedingly suggestive, and we may gather profitable lessons from this selection. There was great opposition to the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. Their neighbors, the Samaritans, had rejoiced at the destruction of the city, and hated the idea of its restoration. Their displeasure and enmity, and consequent opposition, was wholly unprovoked. Nehemiah laid the whole matter before God, and sought his interposition. He would have God punish them as he thought best; he desired that the obstacles to further progress of his work might be removed; and also, that others might be warned not to do as they had done. Having sought wisdom and help of God, Nehemiah planned wisely, and worked faithfully. They carried their weapons with one hand, and wrought with the other. This was not the most convenient course, but it was the safest. The people caught his spirit, and worked with energy and faithful zeal, and the walls rose up in spite of all opposition and difficulty. We need not wonder at their success, for they "had a mind to work." Their example has been a source of encouragement to multitudes of God's people in all succeeding ages. He who prays in humble faith, and works with hearty good will, is sure of success, no matter what the difficulties. So any church who will commit themselves to God, and then unitedly labor for his cause, may expect to see his salvation.

7s & 6s. Work, for the night is coming,
Work through the morning hours;
Work, while the dew is sparkling,
Work 'mid springing flowers;
Work when the day grows brighter,
Work in the glowing sun;
Work for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

Work, for the night is coming,
Work through the sunny noon;
Fill brightest hours with labor,
Rest comes sure and soon;
Give every flying minute
Something to keep in store:
Work, for the night is coming,
When man works no more.

1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

ISAIAH, xi. 1-12.

Messiah's reign was especially to be one of peace. The prophet had said, that the enemies of Israel were like the forests of Lebanon; but Israel was like the stump of a fallen tree, a root without stem or branches. To prepare for Messiah's kingdom, the great forests of pride and power were to be cut down, and from this stump of Jesse, a fresh, green shoot would grow to strength, and beauty, and fruitfulness. In Christ Jesus all the excellences of character here noticed met. He had wisdom, power, and righteousness, and wisely used all for the good of men. He judges not from the outward appearance, but looks on the heart, and hence, judges righteously. Most wonderfully does his grace change the disposition of men naturally like the wolf or leopard, cockatrice or asp, to that of the confiding child. Wonderful sight will it be when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters fill completely the bed of the sea. We may well labor and pray with all diligence and faith to realize it. Glorious will be the dwelling-place of Jesus, when he shall have gathered the second time his people out of all nations, and they shall be arrayed under the banner of peace. Whether this wonderful prediction is ever to be fulfilled in the gathering of the Jews to Canaan, we may not certainly say, but sure we are, here is symbolized the *spiritual* deliverance, peace, and triumph of God's true Israel.

8s, 7s & 1s. O'er the gloomy hills of darkness,
Look, my soul, be still, and gaze;
See the promises advancing
To a glorious day of grace:
Blessed jubilee,
Let thy glorious morning dawn.

Kingdoms wide, that sit in darkness,
Grant them, Lord, the glorious light;
Now, from eastern coast to western,
May the morning chase the night:
Let redemption,
Freely purchased, win the day

17 All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

18 To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

19 The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

20 He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.

21 Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22 It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

23 That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.

24 Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow

upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

27 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

ISAIAH, xl. 17-31.

How grandly inspiring are these words! We are here brought to the living God as the only foundation of man's faith and hope. He who carries creation in his hand carries man on his heart. We trust nature, but that is trusting nature's God, who made her laws, and secures their fulfillment. Isaiah called on his people to trust in this God, and for us there is none other. For despondency and despair, the Bible has one specific,— faith in God's wisdom, power, and love. God never wearies. He who holds earth's oceans in the hollow of his hand, and weighs mountains in his scales, and regards the nations as a drop from the bucket, can surely sustain you. Sitting on the circle of the earth, stretching out the heavens as a curtain, or spreading them as a tent for his dwelling; making the princes and judges of the earth as nothing; naming the stars, calling them out by night and folding them away in the morning: cannot this God be trusted to take care of you? Are you faint for the battle with sin and temptation, for troubles, and perplexities, and anxious cares? He giveth power to the faint, and increases their strength. Wait on him, and, with strength renewed, you shall mount higher than eagles; run, and not weary; walk, and not faint. "Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

C. M. Supreme in wisdom as in power,
The Rock of Ages stands,
Though him thou canst not see, nor trace
The workings of his hands.

Mere human power shall fast decay,
And youthful vigor cease;
But they who wait upon the Lord
In strength shall still increase.

1 For this Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.

11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

HEBREWS, vii. 1-14.

The royal and eternal priesthood of Christ is illustrated by that of Melchizedek, and several important coincidences between Jesus and him are pointed out. In many of the features of Melchizedek we see the lineaments of Jesus. He was "made like unto the Son of God." Did not descend from the priesthood. We have no account of his ancestry or his death. We know less of our Lord's origin. His age is an everlasting day. His being rolls in unbroken streams from eternity to eternity. He always was, and always will be. "I am that I am." His being is eternal love. He carries his people on his heart; their names are graven on his hands. Melchizedek was king of righteousness, and who has such a claim to this title as Jesus? His person and his work are the glory of righteousness. Melchizedek was king, as well as priest, and so is Jesus. He is the great High Priest who entered into heaven, the true holy of holies, and offered his own blood in atonement for the sins of his people. Dear reader, to such a Priest you are invited to come, with your sacrifices and sins. If the offering be a broken heart, a contrite spirit, it will be accepted, and your sins washed away in atoning blood. His intercession will avail; his blood will atone: while his tender love and deep sympathy will comfort and strengthen. Are you trusting in him? He alone can save.

C. M. Now let our cheerful eyes survey
Our great High Priest above,
And celebrate his constant care,
And sympathizing love.

The names of all his saints he bears
Deep graven on his heart;
Nor shall the meanest Christian say
That he hath lost his part

1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

LUKE, xv. 1-10.

One sheep went astray, and he was missed. A loved child is not more quickly missed from the loving family circle than one who leaves God. But love is not satisfied with simply missing,—it goes out after the lost one. Some domestic animals will find their way home when lost, but not so a sheep. It must be sought, and brought back. No sinner will ever come to God unless God goes after him. He has started on a journey away from God, and only infinite love can bring him back. What joy does Jesus have when he finds one wandering sheep! What joy is in heaven! How carefully he brings it back! Too feeble to walk, he lays it on his shoulder. “O the love that Jesus shows.” In the parable of the lost coin, evidently something of value is lost. The light, the sweeping, the diligent search, tell us something prized is gone. Like a Christian when a part of his joy is gone. Nothing was left unloved to find the lost coin. God has left nothing undone to save the lost soul. No doubt, with her sweeping and turning of things over, the woman raised quite a dust, and put her house into confusion. So in saving souls, Jesus is likely to make disturbance and cause murmurings; but what cares the woman, if the silver be found? And why should we care, only that the lost soul be found and saved?

There were ninety and nine that safely lay

In the shelter of the fold,
But one was out on the hills away,

Far off from the gates of gold:
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

“Lord, thou hast here thy ninety and nine;
Are they not enough for thee?”

But the Shepherd made answer: “Tis of
mine

Has wandered away from me;
And although the road be rough, and steep,
I go to the desert to find my sheep.”

But none of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord
passed through

Ere he found his sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert he heard its cry,
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,

There rose a cry to the gate of heaven;

“Rejoice! I have found my sheep!”

And the angels echoed around the throne,
“Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own.”

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians as saying to do were drowned.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

HEBREWS, xi. 28-40.

Where can such a succession of heroes be found who will compare with these witnesses for the faith of the Bible? Faith in God's word was their only sustaining motive; faith in an unseen person; in unseen realities; in unfulfilled promises; in a country, a kingdom in the far distant future. "Nothing personal prompted this faith; nothing selfish nurtured this hope." Apparently there was everything to lose in embracing this faith. "They were our forerunners; they paved the way for us with tears and blood, awaiting our perfection for the fruition of their hope." What inspiration the study of such lives gives us! Were they wise who can question it? Full as their lives were of sufferings, we feel that they were the world's true heroes, and he who imitates them walks in the path of wisdom. If they could speak from their heavenly home, what would they say? Who doubts that they would tell us, our home in heaven more than compensates for a life of earthly sorrow; and though thousands of centuries have passed away, they have hardly begun their eternal life. You will read these words vainly if you are not led to ask for faith that will make you a worthy follower of such men. A life of faith is the only true life. He who leans on God and trusts his word, has a support which nothing can take away. Storms, trials, or death cannot harm him.

C. M. O for an overcoming faith,
To cheer my dying hours,
To triumph o'er the monster Death,
And all his frightful powers.

Joyful, with all the strength I have,
My quivering lips should sing,
"Where is thy boasted victory, Grave,
And where, O Death thy sting."

If sin be pardoned, I'm secure;
Death has no sting beside:
The law gives sin its damning power;
But Christ, my ransom, died.

Now to the God of victory
Immortal thanks be paid,
Who makes us conquerors, while we die,
Through Christ, our living Head.

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

ROMANS, viii. 1-13.

How sweetly do the words, "no condemnation," fall on the ear of the man on trial for his life! The trial is at an end. Eloquent pleas have been made; the judge has summed up, and given the case to the jury; they have reached a verdict. What a moment to the prisoner! "Not guilty." He is overcome with joy. No condemnation; he is free. So with the believer in Christ. He is free from condemnation to eternal death. Christ has met the claims of the law, and he is a free man. He is also made a partaker of that spirit which is not only the author, but the earnest of eternal life. All who are in Christ, as the branch is in the vine, are free from condemnation. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ. No negative thing is this. The prisoner found "not guilty," goes forth to enjoy the society of loved ones, and all that makes life dear. So with the believer; the removal of the condemnation takes off the veil from the Father's face of love. He is born again. He is now a joint-heir with Jesus. What a debt of love and gratitude, believer, you owe to Jesus! You are not debtor to the flesh, but to the Spirit to obey his impulses. You owe yourself and all you have to God, and it is only reasonable that you should give yourself as a living sacrifice.

8s & 7s. Know, my soul, thy full salvation;
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find, in every station,
Something still to do or bear:

Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
Think what Father's smiles are thine;
Think what Jesus did to wip thee:
Child of heaven, canst thou repine?

Haste thee on from grace to glory,
Armed by faith and winged by prayer;
Heaven's eternal day's before thee;
God's own hand shall guide thee there:

Soon shall close thy earthly mission;
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days;
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

LUKE, xv. 11-27.

“The crown and pearl of parables.” Who has not admired and felt its simple beauty? It is a fearful picture which Jesus draws of the younger son,—his property gone, and he in the lowest depths of degradation and misery. But a father's heart is yet full of love, and he is waiting, only too glad to receive the trembling penitent. There are no reproaches; only the kindest of welcomes, with new robes, new rings, and new sandals. No harsh words, but plenty of warm kisses. So God treats the sinner that comes asking forgiveness for Jesus' sake. We need not wait until we have good works to commend us to God. If we do, we certainly shall never come. The prodigal did not wait to win back his property, nor earn new robes. The father most gladly took him back just as he was. He abandoned every hope except that of his father's free forgiveness. Just so would God have a sinner come to him through Christ Jesus. He may come in his rags, nakedness, and poverty, ready to perish, and he will find free forgiveness, arms wide-spread, feet hastening toward him, and words of love and forgiveness on the tongue. God only asks that you come in penitence and faith, and the best of everything is in store for you.

P. M. Come home! come home!
You are weary at heart,
For the way has been dark,
And so lonely and wild.
O Prodigal Child!
Come home, O come home!

Come home! come home!
From the sorrow and blame,
From the sin and the shame,
And the tempter that smiled.
O Prodigal Child!
Come home, O come home!

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth

not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

1 JOHN, v. 3-16.

Salvation comes through faith in Christ. From beginning to end it is all of grace, through faith in Christ's atoning blood. God's law is holy, just, and good; and if man kept it, he would be justified before God, and be saved by works. The obedience, however, must be perfect, for the slightest violation brings its curse on the breaker. The law has its penalties, and he who breaks it must suffer. It knows no mercy, demands simply justice, and *will have it*. No fallen man can render perfect obedience. No man ever lived a day without needing a Saviour; hence no one can be justified by the law. How then shall a man be just with God? There is one way, and only one,—faith in Christ, making us one with him, so that his obedience becomes ours. He kept that law perfectly, and bore the penalty of its curse, and offers the reward of his obedience to all who will trust him. This is the only way of justification. Abraham was a good man, but his *faith*, not his *works*, was reckoned to his account. We cannot begin in faith, and end by works; this is folly, for God must have all the glory of our salvation. The law makes sin appear, and leads us to Christ; and through faith in him, we may be justified and saved. Give up all else, and trust wholly in Christ.

L. M. He lives! he lives! and sits above,
Forever interceding there:
Who shall divide us from his love,
Or what should tempt us to despise?

Faith hath an overcom-ing power;
It triumphs in the dying hour:
Christ is our life, our joy, our hope,
Nor can we sink with such a prop.

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords many,

6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered

unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

1 CORINTHIANS, viii. 1-13.

This question was of special significance to the Christians of Corinth. They were mostly converts from Paganism. It was their custom to eat a portion of the meat offered in sacrifice to idols. If invited to dine with these neighbors, would it be right to eat this meat; would it be right to buy it? On these questions there was a division of opinion. Some who boasted of having much knowledge, said, that as an idol had no real existence, there was no harm in it; others could not understand this, and felt that it was wrong. In his answer, Paul says, that love is a better guide to humble and acceptable obedience than mere knowledge. Love to God includes love to our brethren, and will lead us to seek their best interest. Love will cause us to forego what we may think to be right, when it may become an occasion of stumbling to them. Paul would deny himself of any article of food he could consistently, rather than offend a brother. The principle is one of general application. Rather than occasion stumbling in a brother, love will lead us to deny ourselves. Love will always be a safer guide than knowledge, in showing us what will be for the edification of the whole body of believers. Self-denial for the good of others is one of the gospel's great laws.

8s & 7s. Pilgrims in this vale of sorrow,
Pressing onward toward the prize,
Strength and comfort here we borrow,
From the Hand that rules the skies.

'Mid these scenes of self-denial,
We are called the race to run;
We must meet full many a trial,
Ere the victor's crown is won.

Love shall every conflict lighten,
Hope shall urge us swifter on,
Faith shall every prospect brighten,
Till the morn of heaven shall dawn.

On the Eternal arm reclining,
We at length shall win the day,
All the powers of earth combining,
Shall not snatch our crown away.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is

Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS, viii. 28-39.

What a favored lot have the people of God! If he loves them, then everything that he can do for them will be done. Our scripture selection is an unfolding of this one thought. He loves them, and so all things shall work together for their good. Not *one* thing, but *all*; not simply work, but work together, for there is greater efficiency in combined effort. How calm, then, may the child of God ever be! God is all-wise. No accidents can befall him, no mistakes can occur. Sickness shall work out good; afflictions shall be sanctified; trials will refine and separate the dross from the metal. He can submissively say, "Send me what thou wilt, my God, so long as it comes from thee." Who can succeed against me, if God be for me? Who shall bring any charge against us? Our sins are laid on Jesus, and there is no sin in God's book against us. He sees no sin in Jacob, no iniquity in Israel; they are justified in Christ. For the believer there is no "second death." Whom he justifies, he glorifies. All that is good in the universe is the friend of the Christian; all that is evil is a conquered foe. Away, then, with fears, doubts, despondency. For Jesus' sake, God loves the Christian, and he lies enclosed in the everlasting arms. O wonderful love! who can fathom it?

P. M. I am so glad that our Father in
heaven
Tells of his love in the book he has given;
Wonderful things in the Bible I see;
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me!

CHORUS.—I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me!
I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves even me!

O, if there's only one song I can sing,
When in his beauty I see the great King,
This shall my song in eternity be,
O what a wonder that Jesus loves me! CHO.

Jesus loves me, and I know I love him;
Love brought him down my poor soul to
redeem;
Yes, it was love made him die on the tree;
O, I am certain that Jesus loves me! CHO.

18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

20 And again he said, Wherunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is

risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last

LUKE, xiii. 18-30

No other seed so small as mustard produces so great a tree. No other kingdom had so small a beginning, nor such a growth and greatness. How wonderfully the grace of Christ is leavening humanity! A curious questioner comes to Jesus. He would like to know whether more were saved than lost. It does cost a struggle to be saved; but none are saved without it. Satan makes desperate efforts to keep his subjects. Therefore strive to become a Christian. It is not saying, "Lord, Lord," which proves a man a Christian, but doing the will of God. Why is it hard to be saved? Not because of any inherent difficulties in religion. The trouble is all in the human will. The moment one says, "I will yield to God," the conflict ends. Yet no man says, "I will," without a desperate effort. Hence, unflinching earnestness is needed. The figure our Lord uses shows the need of earnestness also. Such is the custom of the East, that when a door is shut for the night, no entreaty will avail to open it. When the gate of heaven is shut against the sinner, nothing will open it. Tears will not avail; cries of "Lord, Lord," will be of no use. It is not enough that we have been professors of religion. "Strive," says Jesus, "to enter." O the agony, the weeping, the gnashing of teeth, if you are shut out! Strive, dear reader, to enter now.

C. M. "Too late, too late!" how sad the sound.

On anxious human ears,
Of those who've waited long, a prey
To doubts, and hopes, and fears.

But there's a time when, sadder far,
Shall sound in mortal ears,
A dread "Too late!" which, killing hope,
Will turn to truth all fears.

3 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live: and if they kill us, we shall but die.

5 And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.

6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

7 Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried

thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it.

9 Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

10 So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.

11 And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

16 And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord. 2 KINGS, vii. 3-16.

These lepers going to the Syrians was very much like a sinner coming to Christ. They were diseased, and excluded from the society of all except such as had the leprosy. So with us: we have the leprosy of sin in our souls, and are excluded from the society of the pure and holy. We can be companions for fallen angels and fallen men, but cannot for the pure and the holy. These lepers looked all about to find any ground for hope, then went forward. So let us ask, "What must I do to be saved?" How can the fire be extinguished, and the worm killed in our bosom? Sinai cannot help us. The Father has no blood; the Spirit has no blood; the angels have no blood; and our blood is poisoned. Justice cries, "Blood." Nothing else can remove this dreadful leprosy. Hark! Listen! I hear a voice from heaven, "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." Good news! Glad tidings! The Father says, "Spare the sinner! I have found a ransom." These lepers went, and were saved. So all are saved who come to Jesus. It brought great joy into Samaria. So there is much joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. "Why sit we here until we die?" This day is a day of good tidings. Let us tell the king's household of it.

C. M. Come, weary sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve;
Come, with your guilt and fear oppressed,
And make this last resolve:

"I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
Hath like a mountain rose;
I know his courts; I'll enter in.
Whatever may oppose."

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. LUKE, xxiii. 34-49.

What a picture! Would that we could bring it before us in its completeness and its details. The three crosses; the weeping friends; the wondering people; the deriding rulers; the railing malefactor; the praying thief; the darkness covering all; the earthquake rending the veil of the temple; the dying Jesus, yielding his spirit to the Father. Who can look on such a picture, and his heart not break, his face not crimson, his eyes not flood, his whole body not tremble with deep emotion? "The Saviour gathers up his expiring breath to plead for his foes. He is forsaken of man, forsaken of God, in the depths of his woe. Amidst the jeers of his murderers, his voice is heard in prayer for them. What a lesson is here for us! Jesus forgave all. He thought of no one as an enemy. When the victim of his enemies' fury, he became their advocate, and turned the very blindness of their bigotry into a plea for mercy. How beautiful an illustration of his own teaching, and what a perfect pattern for us. The law of kindness ought to rule our hearts. The failings of others should be excused by the best constructions. How endless the lessons we may learn at the cross. Let us take them in and practise them. Dear reader, are you daily exercising this sweet, forgiving spirit?

L. M. "Tis finished!" so the Saviour cried,
And meekly bowed his head, and died:
"Tis finished! yes, the race is run,
The battle fought, the victory won.
"Tis finished! this his dying groan
Shall sins of deepest hue atone,
And millions be redeemed from death
By Jesus' last, expiring breath.

"Tis finished! Heaven is reconciled,
And all the powers of darkness spoiled;
Peace, love, and happiness again
Return, and dwell with sinful men.
"Tis finished! let the joyful sound
Be heard through all the nations round:
"Tis finished! let the triumph rise,
And swell the chorus of the skies.

1 And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house:

4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:

6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side-posts and on the upper door-post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purturance thereof.

10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

11 And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover.

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.

13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

EXODUS, xii. 1-13.

How crowded with Gospel truth is this selection! Though it carries us back to Egypt and Israel, we tarry not, but hasten to Calvary's cross, where we see God's Lamb shedding his blood to save our souls from an eternal death. O that the Holy Spirit may flood our souls with heavenly light, that we may see the full significance of the type, and rightly understand why "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed!" The Passover tells of a night terrible in judgments; for death forced every Egyptian door, and the first-born was a corpse. It was also a night full of sweet and tender love. Death invaded not a home where the blood was seen. The blood of a slain lamb sprinkled on their door-posts had shielded them. They were under the blood. Are we under the blood of Jesus? Are we already started for the heavenly Canaan? If not, the anguish of Egypt that terrible night is a faint picture of our unending eternity of anguish. To save from death, each house must be sprinkled with blood. The blood of Jesus freely flowed, that the hand of faith might use it. Do we live a blood-besprinkled life? Are our souls at all times fresh dripping from this stream of salvation? Then we are safe; our souls may feast on the fat and marrow of grace and love. An unending banquet is ours. Feeding on Christ now; feasting with him forever.

C. P. M. From whence this fear and unbelief,

If God, my Father, put to grief

His spotless Son for me?

Can he, the righteous Judge of men,

Condemn me for that debt of sin,

Which, Lord, was charged to thee?

If thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my place endured

The whole of wrath divine,

Payment God will not twice demand, —

First at my bleeding Surety's hand,

And then again at mine.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

1 CORINTHIANS, xiii. 1-13.

Here is an inspired eulogy of love. The word love should be substituted for charity, as it expresses exactly what Paul meant. This love means the drawing of the whole being toward God. Not even the mother's love for her child is to be compared to the love which regeneration produces in the human heart. It changes the sinful heart, and unites man with God. In this only can man be like God. This is something surpassing even faith, and he who has faith without love is like clattering brass. Such love boasts not of sacrifices, nor speaks of good deeds. It is without envy. It is not disturbed by abuse, nor led to unseemly exhibitions. It rejoices not in the sins of others; thinks no evil, but delights to think well of all. Its highest joy is in the triumph of truth. It never retaliates, but bears reproaches, and endures indignities meekly, hoping ever that man will "cease to do evil, and learn to do well." Such love is greater than knowledge, stronger than faith; the only gift which will endure through all time. Prophecies will fail; tongues will cease; knowledge will vanish away; but love will abide. Hope will remain, faith will remain; yet faith and hope both look to self, while love seeks the good of others. Happy the one who has such love!

7s & 8s. Meek and lowly, pure and holy,
Chief among the blessed Three,
Turning sadness into gladness,
Heaven-born art thou, Charity!

Pity dwelleth in thy bosom,
Kindness reigneth o'er thy heart;
Gentle thoughts alone can sway thee;
Judgment hath in thee no part.

Hoping ever, failing never,
Though deceived, believing still;
Long abiding, all confiding
To thy heavenly Father's will.

Never weary of well-doing,
Never fearful of the end;
Claiming all mankind as brothers,
Thou dost all alike befriend.

1 On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.

2 And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

3 And the king said, What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him.

4 And the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

5 And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6 So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honor more than to myself?

7 And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honor,

8 Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head:

9 And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor.

10 Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

11 Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor.

ESTHER, vi. 1-11

If we were permitted to look on the pages of God's book of providence, we should find very rich instruction. Our selection is one that we may look at; we may read the rest some time. How happens it that the king could not sleep on that special night? Why send for that record-book? How came the servant to read of Mordecai's prompt loyalty just then? God knows the secret of all this. He giveth sleep, and knows when to withhold it. We ought to learn a lesson of trust here. We believe in a general providence. It is not enough. The general is made up of particulars. We ought to believe that God superintends everything; nothing occurs without his notice, nothing without his permission. He notes the falling sparrow, counts the hairs of our head, and makes all things work together for good to them that love him. He defeats the wicked schemes of their enemies, and turns their weapons on themselves. He uses them to unmeaningly honor his servants. What a blessing to be the Lord's child, to be led by an unerring hand, sure of his protection, his care, his unchanging favor. Believer, do you know your high privilege, and prize and rejoice in it as you should? You are the child of the King of the universe, heir of all things, sure that no good thing will be withheld from you.

L. M. He leadeth me! O blessed thought! O words with heavenly comfort fraught; Whate'er I do, whate'er I be, Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, Nor ever murmur nor repine; Content, whatever lot I see, Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers,

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21 And teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors

were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison-doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

ACTS, xvi. 19-34.

Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises in that prison, and the Lord was there. If our hearts are only right, we can turn an inner prison into a sanctuary of prayer and praise. How far above our thoughts are the thoughts of God, and how easily he makes the wrath of man to praise him. With the earthquake which opened the prison-doors, God opened the jailer's hard heart, so that he saw his need of the salvation these men preached. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia; he opened the heart of this wicked man: but how different the means! Where gentleness will not prevail, a thunderbolt may be sent, for he can open the hardest heart. The jailer asks a momentous question; he gets a simple answer. It is the only reply to an inquiring soul. Take Christ's righteousness instead of your own; his wisdom rather than yours. It is not a black catalogue of crimes which will condemn a man, so much as his rejection of Christ. How simple the way of salvation! Faith in Christ leads us to him; love makes us want to be near him and like him. The better we know him, the stronger our faith in him. So are we changed into his image. Faith in Christ only can save. As many as receive him become the sons of God.

P. M. Weeping will not save me:
Though my face were bathed in tears,
That could not allay my fears,
Could not wash the sins of years:
Weeping will not save me.

Waiting will not save me:
Helpless, guilty, lost, I lie;
In my ear is mercy's cry;
If I wait, I can but die:
Waiting will not save me.

24 So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduest before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would.

25 And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit-trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness.

26 Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.

27 Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou hearest them from Leaven; and according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

28 But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when

they returned, and cried unto thee, thou hearest them from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies;

29 And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law; yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them; and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.

30 Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.

31 Nevertheless for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.

32 Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.

NEHEMIAH, ix. 24-32.

Confession of sin is a plain duty. It is frequently enjoined in God's word. There are many examples to enforce it. God says, if we confess and forsake our sins, he will be merciful and gracious to forgive us. But there is no promise without it. We may sin as a nation, and then our sins cannot be put away until, in a national capacity, we confess them. This was what Israel was doing in our selection. God had been exceedingly gracious; they had come into possession of a rich land, with an abundance of all good things, and God had kept on heaping blessings upon blessings. And yet they rebelled; turned away from him; fell into idolatry, and all sinful practices. He had chastised them, and smarting under the correction, they had cried for mercy, and found it. But in prosperous hours they forgot him again. Seven judgments fell on them. They were made captives. Others possessed their lands. But God did not utterly consume them. His heart yearned over them; he pitied them, and spared a holy seed. How can we sin against such divine goodness? If we have fallen into sin, let us confess and forsake it utterly. Let us return unto God, and he will forgive us. But do not abuse his goodness. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little."

L 11. Return, my wandering soul, return,
And seek an injured Father's face;
Those warr. desires that in thee burn
Were kindled by redeeming grace.

Return, my wandering soul, return;
Thy dying Saviour bids thee live;
Go, view his bleeding side, and learn
How freely Jesus can forgive.

1 When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died.

2 And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.

3 Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.

4 Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me.

5 I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.

6 According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

7 Therefore I will be unto them as a lion: as a leopard by the way will I observe them:

8 I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them.

9 O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

10 I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes?

11 I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.

12 The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is hid.

13 The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: he is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children.

14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. *Hosea, xiii. 1-14*

God is very faithful to his people, telling them of their sins, that they may repent and forsake them. Idolatry was Israel's besetting sin. From the days of Ahab, till the long captivity cursed them, they were constantly putting some miserable idol in God's place. Strange that a people who were so often reminded of God's goodness in their history, should be thus guilty. Yet all too true! Their sufferings were often closely connected with their sins, so that they could see in the punishment their guilt. But instead of producing such an effect as should have resulted, they sinned more and more. Innumerable tokens of God's love had been given them; he had showered blessings upon them, and led them with a loving hand. He could most truly say, "Thou hast destroyed thyself." God would have every one of his creatures as pure and spotless as Gabriel, clad with all his perfections, and resplendent with divine glory. But for sin they would be so. It is sin which has destroyed the divine image in man; robbed him of his purity; and unless God help him, it will thrust him to the lowest hell. God is the only Saviour: there is none other name under heaven, given among men, by which we can be saved. But blessed be God, Jesus did become death's plague, and the grave's destroyer. Forsake thy sins, trust in Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.

C. M. How sad our state by nature is;
Our sin, how deep it stains;
And Satan binds our captive souls
Fast in his slavish chains.

My soul obeys the gracious call,
And runs to this relief;
I would believe thy promise, Lord;
O help my unbelief!

5 And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build a house for the Lord God of Israel.

7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God:

8 But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

10 He shall build a house for my name;

and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

14 Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

15 Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16 Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee. 1 CHRONICLES, xxii. 5-16.

“In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy steps.” David fully believed this, and as far as he had done it had been blessed. Though not permitted to build the temple himself, his heart was engaged in making all possible preparations, and great preparations he made. A good example for us, in regard to efforts to advance the cause of God. We should do all we can. We cannot all go to heathen lands to tell the story of the cross, but we can contribute of our abundance or poverty, and consecrate it with our prayers, and God will accept it. David recognized Solomon’s need of wisdom and understanding in so responsible a position. He was young, and likely to turn aside from God’s law. It would be a sad day for him if he should, and it is sad for any one to forsake God. Strength and courage come in the way of obedience to God’s commands. Sin destroys moral courage, and is rottenness to one’s flesh. The heart and soul should be set on seeking God’s glory, if we are to do his work successfully. It requires careful thought, constant self-denial, and great grace, to live for Christ; doing nothing, saying nothing, desiring nothing which has not his glory in view. But it can be done, and must be, if we are to live true Christian lives. Then our undertakings will be prosperous.

8s, 7s, & 4s. Guide me, O thou great
Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of Heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing waters flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Guide me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are right, re-

joicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

12 Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

PSALMS, xix. 1-14.

David was a devout student of nature and revelation. When a shepherd-boy, he had found ample time to study God's works. Their vastness revealed the Creator's immensity; their height, his sovereignty; their influence on the earth manifested his providence and beneficence. Day and night come and go in silence, uttering no audible words; yet they bear a testimony for God to the bounds of creation. "Like an unbroken chain, their message is delivered from day to day, and from night to night. At the silence of one herald, another takes up his speech, and holy silence itself is a speech to the listening soul." How blind and deaf must a man be, not to see and hear God in nature! But in his law there is a still more glorious revelation of God. It is distinct and certain. It revives the depressed; makes wise the unskilled; rejoices the lover of truth; strengthens the desponding; and by God's grace, brings a rich reward. "Like the sun of the Syrian sky, this law searches everything by its light and heat; the secret faults, the unconscious errors, no less than willful and presumptuous sins." David would be clear of all sin, and kept from it. Our evil nature, like an ill-natured horse, is apt to run away with us. It needs to be held by the bridle of God's grace, lest it rush to ruin. Divine grace alone can free us from the power of sin. Then only can our conduct become blameless, and our words acceptable.

L. M. God of the morning, at thy voice
The cheerful sun makes haste to rise,
And like a giant doth rejoice
To run his journey through the skies.

O, like the sun may I fulfil
Th' appointed duties of the day;
With ready mind and active will,
March on, and keep my heavenly way.

10

Lord, thy commands are clean and pure,
Enlightening our beclouded eyes;
Thy threatenings just, thy promise sure;
Thy gospel makes the simple wise.

Give me thy counsels for my guide,
And then receive me to thy bliss;
All my desires and hopes beside
Are faint and cold compared with this.

1 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.

5 For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

9 Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good. PSALMS, cxxii. 1-9.

1 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say;

2 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

3 Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.

7 Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

PSALMS, cxxiv. 1-8.

The service of God's house should be joyful. He does not want long faces and disconsolate hearts in his courts. He would have the whole service a delight, so that every one will rejoice when the hour comes to go up to the sanctuary. Many Christians think so much about themselves, their sins, their sorrows, their cares, their anxieties, that they have no time to be joyful. We should cast our sins on Jesus, by faith and repentance, but should go to God's house with happy hearts and cheerful faces, and if tears must come, let them run over a face radiant with the light of heaven. It is our Father's house, and he will be there, and so will Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and we ought to be a happy family. The world should have no reason to think we are not. We shall need no urging to pray for the peace and prosperity of the church, when we take such delight in her. We cannot help it, more than the lark can restrain his morning song. The whole life will be a prayer in her behalf. Many are the occasions when God's people have to thank him for glorious deliverance from danger and trouble. It seems as though the deep waters would overwhelm the church. But God speaks, and the proud waters are stayed, the lion's mouth is shut, the snare is broken. Happy the man who has the Lord on his side! How is it in this family? How is it with you, reader?

C. M. How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say,
"In Zion let us all appear,
And keep the solemn day!"

I love her gates, I love the road;
The church, adorned with grace,
Stands like a palace built for God,
To show his milder face.

Up to her courts, with joy unknown,
The holy tribes repair;
The Son of David holds his throne,
And sits in judgment there.

My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
Here my best friends, my kindred dwell;
Here God, my Saviour, reigns.

13 Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

16 And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

17 They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in

the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

19 And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.

20 In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.

21 So we labored in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

22 Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labor on the day.

23 So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing.

NEHEMIAH, iv. 13-23.

If we live a godly life, we shall need to be clad in the whole armor of God. We must have on the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. God's armory is well supplied with all these weapons; and we need them, and will be greatly to blame if we do not equip ourselves with them. It will not do to put off our armor by day or night, for we are liable to sudden attacks from a watchful enemy, whose faithful emissaries will quickly notify him of an unguarded point. Let us not forget to use the weapon of *prayer*, which we will find always useful. If we are weak, it will nerve us; if we are faint, it will revive us. It will remove doubts, and encourage the fearful. Then exercise will help us to skillfully use all the other weapons. It will teach us so to use the sword of the Spirit, that all enemies will flee from it. We can call to our aid the Holy Spirit, who will give point and edge to the sword, making it a very effective weapon in our hand. This armor will not interfere with our working, — in fact, will facilitate it. Let us then work, and even when we sleep have our weapons by our side.

C. M. The Saviour bids us watch and pray,
Through life's brief, fleeting hour,
And gives the Spirit's quickening ray
To those who seek his power.

The Saviour bids us watch and pray,
Maintain a warrior's strife;
Help, Lord, to hear thy voice to-day;
Obedience is our life.

The Saviour bids us watch and pray;
For soon the hour will come
That calls us from the earth away,
To our eternal home.

O Saviour, we would watch and pray,
And hear thy sacred voice,
And walk, as thou hast marked the way,
To heaven's eternal joys.

1 I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

4 One generation shall praise thy works to ~~another~~, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

6 And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.

7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

9 The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

10 All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To make known to the sons of men his

mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

14 The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

15 The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

18 The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

20 The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever. PSALMS, cxlv. 1-21.

David meditated much upon the character of God, and found abundant reasons for praise. Here the majesty and goodness of God are celebrated in the most beautiful manner. He is a great God, a majestic being; but his greatness appears more wonderful to the adoring soul in his righteousness and goodness. These characteristics have so stirred men's hearts, that they have made them the theme of song and conversation, as well as public discourse. He is good to all; not a creature in his universe who is not blessed by him. Who can sound the depths of his mercy, displayed in numberless things, exhibited most wonderfully in the cross of Christ? Says David, "The saints will speak of the glory of thy kingdom;" and what a theme! It is all glorious—in its inception, establishment, growth, and destiny. What honor and glory it brings to him who laid its foundations, secures its success, and is pledged to its complete triumph. What a glorious King! The remembrance of his holiness and goodness should inspire every tongue, for he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. He, who so loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth might live, is worthy of unceasing adoration. But he adds to this the gift of the Spirit as a Comforter. Believer, praise should employ thy breath; it is comely. Your tongue cannot be used in any way so suitably.

L. M. Great God, whose universal sway
The known and unknown worlds obey,
Now give the kingdom to thy Son;
Extend his power, exalt his throne.

The heathen lands, that lie beneath
The shades of overspreading death,
Revive at his first dawning light,
And deserts blossom at the sight.

1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3 Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

7 They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12 O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. PSALMS, lxxxiv. 1-12.

1 O God, thou art my God: early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

3 Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:

6 When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

PSALMS, lxiii. 1-7.

The psalmist has left a little blank here for any of us to fill. He says, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." A thousand what? Just whatever you please. Put in the blank a thousand days, weeks, or years, — and David's name is signed. I believe twenty-four hours' enjoyment of the fullness of Christ's love brings more solid peace and joy into the soul than a thousand years in the highest pleasures the world can give. What a precious truth, "The Lord a sun,—to give light and heat; a shield,—to protect; that he gives grace first, and this ends in everlasting glory. Nothing good, but much that is bad is withheld from the upright. When David was deprived the privileges of God's courts, he more highly prized them. He even envied the sparrow with its nest about the sanctuary. God's "ways are in the sanctuary." His springs are Zion. The river that gladdens the world starts here. Like Israel going from well to well, so Christ's children go from one privilege to another, until they reach the heavenly city. O what light, what strength, what peace and comfort have been found in the tabernacles. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."

S. M. Welcome, sweet day of rest,

That saw the Lord arise;

Welcome to this reviving breast,

And these rejoicing eyes.

The King himself comes near,

And feasts his saints to-day;

Here we may sit, and see him here,

And love, and praise, and pray.

One day amid the place

Where Christ, my Lord, has been,

Is sweeter than ten thousand days

Of pleasure and of sin.

My willing soul would stay

In such a frame as this,

Till called to rise and soar away

To everlasting bliss.

1 As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?

4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the

land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.

7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8 Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALMS, xlii. 1-11.

David was in exile, because of Absalom's rebellion, when he wrote these psalms. "They are remarkable for the beauty of their imagery, the depth of religious emotion, and the noble, victorious struggle against despondency." Surely, it is from deepest wells men see the stars most clearly; and when under sore trials, they give expression to their strongest, clearest, and sweetest thoughts. Faith and sense contend for the mastery in his soul. Recalling former days, and longing for the return of the good old times, he thirsts for God, as the chased hart pants for the water-brooks. He feasted on his tears. The memory of other days—holidays, when he had joined the multitude in the house of God—only added to his sorrow. Faith checks his stormy grief. Whence this despondency? God lives, and I may hope in him. These days will not last forever. They are dark; it is trying, but they will end. God will appear. "At evening time it shall be light." I will look up. How true a picture of the experience of many of God's people! But how unnecessary! God is not dead. He has not ceased to care for you. He loves you as tenderly as ever, notwithstanding the change in your circumstances. There is only one thing for a Christian really to mourn over,—that is, *s' n.* Believe without wavering, and the sun will shine on your path, and your countenance will be lifted and lighted with joyous hope every moment.

C. M. With earnest longings of the mind,
My God, to thee I look;
So pants the hunted hart to find
And taste the cooling brook.

When shall I see thy courts of grace,
And meet my God again?
So long an absence from thy face
My heart endures with pain.

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

3 Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

4 One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.

7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O'God of my salvation.

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.

11 Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

14 Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. PSALMS, xxvii. 1-14.

David says, "The Lord is my light and my salvation." The Lord gives divine light to every soul before salvation, as its precursor. When we are sad, he becomes the joy, the comfort, the guide, the teacher, the light of our lives. He is the strength of our life,—who shall make us afraid? If God be our strength, then a host need not alarm us, for more are they on our side. We only need to have our eyes opened, as did the prophet's servant, to see our protection. The gems of your breastplate will not show their lustre until the hour of trouble comes. Your enemies may threaten to swallow you up, but God will hide you away in his royal tent. Your way will be joyful, and full of songs of praise. Yet here we drink from a mingled cup. Hope and fear sway us in turn. But in the greatest darkness, the time of bitterest desolation,—when father and mother even have forgotten us,—the Lord will take us up. Most persons see to believe; but, with David, believing was seeing. He walked by faith, not by sight. It was all dark as midnight; but he expected to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, hence he could say, "Wait on the Lord." He who waits in faith, and in patience, and in hope, with good courage, will find help in the time of need.

C. M. Through all the changing scenes of life,

In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ.

O, make but trial of his love;
Experience will decide
How blest are they, and only they,
Who in his truth confide.

1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men :

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it. This is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

3 If a man beget a hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.

4 For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing : this hath more rest than he other.

6 Yea, though he live a thousand years

twice told, yet hath he seen no good : do not all go to one place ?

7 All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.

8 For what hath the wise more than the fool ? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living ?

9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man : neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

11 Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better ?

12 For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow ? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun ?

ECCLESIASTES, vi. 1-12.

Many are the evils under the sun. Solomon here discourses upon one which is not uncommon. The case is that of the miser, who has an abundance of wealth, but no disposition to use it in procuring the things which make life enjoyable. He is a miser, who will not use his wealth, but leaves it to be enjoyed by some heir. God must give us the disposition to use wisely earthly goods, or they are of no advantage. Long life, a large family, without a right disposition, are all vanity, since they are full of trouble, and end in death. All that man really needs is food and clothing ; but he desires much more, which makes him unhappy ; and the most prolific source of unhappiness is desiring things we cannot obtain. How differently does the Christian, who sees the full blaze of immortality, look upon life and time ! He looks to that blessed world where all is peace and joy, where is no vanity or vexation, and lays up his treasures there. God's children realize that all good things come from him ; and these are only good when used for their own comfort and the happiness of others. No man gets a true idea of life or its enjoyments until he becomes a Christian : then he knows that all things shall work for his good. Hence, no murmurings or repinings ; but, trusting his Father, he bears adversity, or rejoices in prosperity, sure that he will soon be called to a home in heaven.

P. M. 'Tis religion that can give,
In the light, in the light,
Sweetest pleasure while we live,
In the light of God.
'Tis religion must supply,
In the light, in the light,
Solid comfort when we die,
In the light of God.

After death its joys shall be,
In the light, in the light,
Lasting as eternity,
In the light of God.
Be the living God my Friend,
In the light, in the light;
Then my bliss shall never end.
In the light of God.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope;

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption

into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travailleth in pain together until now.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. ROMANS, viii. 14-27.

Are you a true Christian? Think what it implies,— a son of God; a partaker of his moral nature; an heir of his kingdom. Who can estimate this? But this implies your being led by the Spirit. He led Christ. He will lead you,— lead you to see your sins; to confess them; to forsake them; to the throne of grace; to most earnest and effectual prayer; to the gatherings of his saints; to the homes of the poor and needy. A child and heir, a joint-heir with Christ. Christ is “heir of all things,” sole proprietor of the universe, yet he admits his people to joint-heirship. He shares all with them,— the golden streets; the pearly gates; the river of life. The bliss and the unutterable glory are by our blessed Lord made over to us for our everlasting possessions. He would not sit upon his own throne until he had procured a place on it for all his children. “Christ’s throne, crown, sceptre, palace, treasures, robes, heritage, are yours.” In heaven, the saints will be continually saying, “The one half was never told us.” Suffering with Christ must come before being glorified with him. How great that glory of the saints will be, for the display of which the whole creation groans and longs! Sustained by hope, enjoying the earnest of the Spirit already, we may well wait with patience the future manifestations. Heir of God, rejoice!

6s & 8s. Arise, my soul, arise;
Shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding Sacrifice
In my behalf appears;
Before the throne my Surety stands;
My name is written on his hands.

The Father hears him pray,
His dear anointed One:
He cannot turn away
The presence of his Son:
His Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God.

1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

LUKE, iv. 1-13.

Jesus was "tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Satan sought to overthrow Christ by the power of thought. He enters through this channel. The thought was put into Christ's mind to give up his religion, and he could be universal king, so popular was he just then. "Get thee behind me, Satan," said Jesus. Then the thought was thrown into his mind to tempt God by jumping from the pinnacle of the temple. This was met with the sword of the Spirit. There is no sin in a wicked thought if we do not want or cherish it. We shall need all the Christian armor, and to wear it all our journey through. Satan departed from Jesus for a season. How often he departs from us for a season! Then our peace is like a river. We can hardly believe we shall sin as we have done. Then we make vows of faithfulness, or, like Peter, we think, "Though all men should deny thee, yet will not I." But the tempter returns with renewed power, and unless kept by the strong arm, like Peter, we deny Christ again. Let us remember that Satan is a conquered foe, and "trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees." Faith is a constant shield. "Only believe," and Christ can keep us every hour.

L. M. My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in thy word,
But in thy life the law appears,
Drawn out in living characters.

Such was thy truth, and such thy zeal,
Such deference to thy Father's will,
Such love and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe and make them mine.

Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of thy prayer;
The desert thy temptations knew,
Thy conflict, and thy victory too.

Be thou my pattern; make me bear
More of thy gracious image here;
Then God, the Judge, shall own my name
Among the followers of the Lamb.

10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that on mine account;

19 I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-laborers.

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

PHILEMON, 10-25.

Could anything be more courteous, touching, and tenderly beautiful than this brotherly letter? What a model of Christian correspondence! Onesimus was a wicked servant, who had wronged his master, and ran away from his service. But the prayers of his master followed him, and providence led him to hear Paul preach; the gospel took hold of his heart, and he became a believer. The apostle was greatly pleased with his character after his change, and would gladly have retained his services if it had not been proper for him to return to his master. In this most graceful and genial letter, Paul commends Onesimus to Philemon's kindness, testifies to the change wrought in him by divine grace, and intimates with the most refined delicacy the duty of a Christian master toward a servant who has now become "a brother beloved." He says, "If he has wronged or owes you anything, put that to my account." Grace had wrought such a change in the servant, that his flight had been overruled of God for the good of both. While Paul proposes to make good any loss Philemon may have sustained, he intimates how great are his friend's obligations to himself. This letter is an invaluable model of courteousness and freedom in the intercourse of Christian friendship. It places before us an example of what Christian correspondence may be, when conducted with mutual good will and an "eye single to God's glory." A friendly correspondence may be made a very great source of help, as well as Christian comfort and joy.

C. M. How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those that love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word!

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye
And joy from heart to heart.

1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation;

10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him.

16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

PSALMS, xci. 1-16.

What a refuge God's people find in him! The loving-kindness and care of the Lord are sweetly celebrated in these verses. We should esteem it a great favor to know that God is our friend, though far off, and we may rejoice in the hope of dwelling with him forever. But here is something better for us to-day. We may enter his secret places now. It is the blessed privilege of every child of God to have constant communion, to be at home in God, and to repose in him as his rest. He can sing,—

“In God I have found a retreat,
Where I can securely abide;
No refuge nor rest so complete;
And here I intend to reside.”

Those who make him their habitation, who know God's name, who set their love upon him, who call on him, may stand in safety beneath his outspread wings, covered completely by his shadow. But there may be arrows by day, and terrors by night. There may be waiting destruction at noon, and the pestilence in the darkness. A thousand may fall by your side, and ten thousand on your right hand. All this may be true, but it shall not come nigh thee. You shall see the reward of the wicked; but, hid in the clefts of the Rock, you are safe. Fear, evil, plagues, violence, treachery, cannot find you in your secure retreat. Deliverance, honor, long life, salvation, are all yours. Trusting in the Lord, you are as immovable as Mount Zion.

L. M. God is our refuge and defence;
In trouble our unfailing aid:
Sectie in his omnipotence,
What foe can make our souls afraid?

Yea, though the earth's foundations rock,
And mountains down the gulf be hurled,
His people smile amid the shock:
They look beyond this transient world.

1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment:

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

MATTHEW, xxii. 1-13.

All persons were bound to come to a royal feast, not only for the sake of honor and advantage, but as evidence of loyalty. The guests were first invited, and then notified of the hour when the feast was ready. God had sent many invitations to the Jews by the prophets, who had foretold Messiah's coming. They should have been ready when John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus announced that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. But they were not ready, refused every invitation, and finally brought on themselves God's fearful wrath by putting his Son to death. When the Jews refused Christ, the apostles were instructed to turn to the Gentiles, and give an invitation to all, whosoever would come. The best men need the gospel; the worst are welcome to its blessings. When the host provided the wedding-garment, there was no excuse for any appearing without one. God has sent us a great many invitations to believe on his Son; to come to the feast of grace provided for all hungry ones. Let us accept these royal gifts; they are what we need. Come just as you are to Christ, but be sure to put on his robe of righteousness. The man who has it not will be speechless. May we not be of that number! The outer darkness, with its weeping and gnashing of teeth, will be a terrible place to spend an eternity.

S. M. "All things are ready." Come,
Come to the supper spread;
Come rich and poor, come old and young,
Come, and be richly fed.

"All things are ready." Come;
The invitation's given
Through him who now in glory sits,
At God's right hand in heaven.

"All things are ready." Come,
The door is open wide;
O, feast upon the love of God,
For Christ, his Son, has died!

"All things are ready." Come;
All hindrance is removed;
And God, in Christ's own precious love,
To fallen man is proved.

1 Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

5 And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field:

7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

9 O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid;

say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

10 Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

13 Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?

14 With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?

15 Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering.

ISAIAH, xl. 1-16.

Jesus is the world's comforter. He comes as a king, and the way must be prepared for his triumphant march. The valleys must be filled up, the mountains brought down, the crooked straightened, the rough made plain. Every earthly thing shall perish; but God's eternal word and promise will stand: his truth will not fail. Though Jesus came in humble guise, he was clothed with majesty and almighty power. His hand sways the sceptre of the universe. He will secure the salvation of multitudes of the lost. He is the Good Shepherd, tender and careful of all his flock, providing them the choicest food, and peculiarly compassionate toward the weak. He has deep love for his weak brethren, and imposes upon them no heavy burdens, nor allows them too severe trials. What can we want, which we do not find in Jesus? He is mighty to save, and saves to the uttermost all who come to God through him. He is full of compassion; his heart is made of tenderness. He is rich in stores of wisdom and love, and abounds in rewards for his loving people. If you know him by experience, you may be sure you have only begun to feast on his bounties: eternity will not exhaust them; and they will grow better all the way. He will fill your soul with good things, if your faith will only open a channel.

7s. Children of the heavenly King,
As we journey, let us sing;
Sing our Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in his works and ways.

We are travelling home to God,
In the way our fathers trod;
They are happy now, and we
Soon their happiness shall see.

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having

promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.

10 For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1 TIMOTHY, iv. 1-16.

Many are the faithful sayings of the Bible. Paul here speaks of one of them. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." "Here is set forth the double blessedness which we obtain through the salvation of Christ,—the blessings of the upper and nether springs,—of time, and of eternity." The privileges of salvation in the present life are very great, but indescribable are those of the life to come. In a godly life we find peace from a troubled conscience. The occasion of conflict is removed, opposition to God's will is taken away, and there is a willing acquiescence to the divine requirements. Then when troublesome questions arise, such as are connected with the heresies predicted by the Spirit, they are compared with the inspired teaching. Practical duties are solved in the same way, so that the believer walks in a peaceful road through life. "Great peace have they that love thy law." The true child of God finds an ever increasing delight in the study of the word, and in commanding its gracious truths to all others. If we are true Christians, we know the half of the joy of godly living has never been told. Let us take heed to these things, and continue in them, for the salvation of the soul is the principal thing.

L. M. So let our lips and lives express
The holy gospel we profess;
So let our works and virtues shine,
To prove the doctrine all divine.

Thus shall we best proclaim abroad
The honors of our Saviour God,
When his salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin.

8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

MARK, xv. 8-28.

There is great danger lest our very familiarity with these words should hinder them from having the effect upon our hearts they should. We need to remember that this story was new. There was a night when Jesus was betrayed; a morning when judgment was taken from him, and this mock trial took place; a day when he was nailed to the cross, and was left to die amid the cruel taunts of a mocking crowd. During this time the earth shook, and the sun veiled his face, and nature thus sympathized with its Maker in his sufferings. Let us not forget these things. God grant the story may move our hearts as though we had never read it before. The notorious robber and murderer was released, that the Prince of peace, the King of kings, the innocent Jesus, might die. Why that scourging, that crown of thorns, that cross-bearing, that crucifixion? Why that death among mal-factors? Because he consented, with the Father, to stand in the sinner's place, and endure all this for the sinner's sake. Yes, it was for our sakes he endured all this, to deliver us from eternal death. Shall we not, then, most gladly crucify all our sins for his sake, that we may dwell forever with him? We cannot do less. God help us to make thorough work of this!

L. M. Ye that pass by, behold the Man—
The Man of griefs condemned for you:
The Lamb of God for sinners slain,
Weeping to Calvary pursue.

His sacred limbs they stretch, they tear;
With nails they fasten to the wood;
His sacred limbs, exposed and bare,
Or only covered with his blood.

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

1 CORINTHIANS, xii. 1-16.

The prophets had foretold a wonderful outpouring of the Spirit; and Jesus had comforted his disciples with the promise that they should be endued with the power of that Spirit. The day of Pentecost witnessed the fulfillment of the prophecy, and the realization of Jesus' promise. These gifts came on all believers, producing different effects. The worst difficulty was connected with the gift of tongues, and wrought serious trouble in the church at Corinth. Paul had much trouble in correcting these abuses. Many were proud and boastful of their gifts, despising their brethren. The truth which the apostle illustrates and enforces is, that the Spirit dwells in all believers as Christ's body, manifesting himself in different ways. As in the human body, the principle of life manifests itself in one organ,—as the faculty of vision, or of hearing, or feeling,—so the Holy Spirit manifests himself variously in the different members of the church. One has the gift of tongues, another of teaching, another of healing; but it is one Spirit that works in them all, for the edification and mutual benefit of the whole. We need the caution now as much as ever. The Spirit of Jesus will make us humble and thankful, ready to fill any office, whether it be that of the eye, the ear, the tongue, the hand, or the foot. It is all service for the body, and will contribute to the glory of Christ, the Head.

P. M. If you are too weak to journey

Up the mountain, steep and high,
You can stand within the valley,
Where the multitudes go by.

12

You can visit the afflicted,
O'er the erring you can weep;
You can be a true disciple,
Sitting at the Saviour's feet.

17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine executors righteousness.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

21 Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

22 A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

ISAIAH, lx. 17-22.

1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness. The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

ISAIAH, lxi. 1-3.

No man can read the history of Israel without being forced to the conclusion that God loved him with an unceasing love. Jesus loves his church, giving his life, and lavishing his treasures upon her. He came with good news. He found them broken-hearted captives of sin, and he gave them liberty such as none others know. He found them bound in prison, and he proclaimed the jubilee, and opened every prison-door. He found them mourning, and gave them comfort; he found them in sackcloth and ashes, and gave them a garment of praise, for heaviness. After a season of drought, how refreshing is the rain! How everything rejoices! Flowers put on new beauty, and exhale a richer fragrance; the grass sparkles with the drops; the birds sing; and everything in nature rejoices. So the coming of Jesus has revived and refreshed everything. Sinful, dying humanity has had new life infused into it. Broken-hearted men have been made to rejoice; fettered captive souls have been liberated, and mourning ones are made to sing for joy. Jesus never enters a home or a heart without making a most wondrous transformation. Has he not changed all our prospects, healed all our wounds, revived all our hopes, made life fair and beautiful, and inspired us with immortal joys?

C. M. Joy to the world! the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love.

4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

5 Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

6 Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as a hireling, his day.

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 Yet through the scents of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up;

12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the

grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

16 The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.

17 Thou prevalest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

18 His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he per ceiveth it not of them.

19 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

JOB, xiv. 4-22.

What a description of human frailty, and the brevity of life, we have just read! Man comes forth like a flower, and departs like a shadow. Only yesterday some of us were children, or gay youths: to-day, we are bending with age. A tree may be cut down, and yet revive and live. But man dies and wastes away, and we can only see his hasty footprints as we follow with the inquiry, "Where is he?" If we would find our friends, we must go where they have been seen. We choose our society, and go where we are fitted to go. We look up for Abraham, and Moses, and Elijah, but downward for Judas and his associates. Job desired God to take him, and keep him secret until his wrath was past. O what a place of safety to be hid in God! "He is able to keep what I have committed to him." Job was sure that however long it might be before the resurrection morning, God would call him, and he would answer, and would see God, his Saviour, for himself, and not for another. Will it not be pleasant to see our Redeemer in all his beauty, never again to die? Job was certain that, whatever course his children should take after his departure, he should not perceive it of them. So that Jesus says, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Free from care and pain, they rest in active, sweet peace, in heaven.

S. M. O sing to me of heaven;

When I am called to die,

Sing songs of holy ecstasy,

To waft my soul on high. CHORUS.

When the last moment comes,

O, watch my dying face,

To catch the bright, seraphic gleam

Which o'er my features plays. CHO.

Then to my raptured soul

Let one sweet song be given,

Let music cheer me last on earth,

And greet me first in heaven. CHO.

Then round my senseless clay

Assemble those I love,

And sing of heaven, delightful heaven,

My glorious home above. CHO.

46 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities . the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

50 And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came: which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

51 And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

52 And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

53 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

54 And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

GENESIS, xli. 46-57.

This selection tells of great misery over all Egypt. Bread had failed: hunger came to every table only to find an empty board. Is there no hope? Yes, the storehouses are full, and the monarch sends his subjects to Joseph. "He opened all the storehouses." How such tidings would fly through the land! We may see the crowds hastening for relief, and we need not wonder, for want urges every step; here is their only hope. This word tells you of Jesus, to whom all hungry souls may come for the bread of life. In Christ there is enough and to spare, and no hunger shall they know who feed on him. Who can describe the banquet to which Jesus invites the starving? Rich beyond all language are his entertainments; it is angelic food, bread of heaven. For every hungry soul his word furnishes the most healthful nourishment, for every word is spirit and life. Weary, heavy-laden with many trials, afflictions, and temptations, here they find comfort which lightens the eyes, cheers the spirits, and rests the tired body. Miles lay between them and Egypt's storches; but faith brings us in a moment to Jesus; and the door is always open, and the supply abundant: you have only to ask, and receive.

C. M. Ye wretched, hungry, starving poor,
Behold a royal feast,
Where Mercy spreads her bounteous store
For every humble guest.

There Jesus stands with open arms;
He calls — he bids you come:
Though guilt restrains, and fear alarms,
Behold, there yet is room.

O, come, and with his children taste
The blessings of his love;
While hope expects the sweet repast
Of nobler joys above.

There, with united heart and voice,
Before the eternal throne,
Ten thousand thousand souls rejoice,
In songs on earth unknown.

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

MATTHEW, v. 21-32.

When we hear of one man killing another, we shudder; but we are told here, whosoever is angry with his brother without cause is in danger of the same curse with murderers,—the Judgment; and whosoever shall say, "Thou fool," shall be in danger of hell-fire. Let us inquire, as we pray, Has any one aught against me? has he occasion for it? If so, let me try to have it settled as soon as possible. We may sin in a look or in a desire. Any sinful habit, or sin in any form, should be put away, even if it seems as difficult as to pluck out a right eye, or cut off a hand. Is there one sin, or sinful habit in our life, we are not willing to part with at once? This may prove our ruin forever. Let us live in peace with all men, as far as possible. How unhappy that person feels who cherishes an unkind or hard feeling toward any one! And besides, God is displeased with us, unless our hearts and lives are in harmony with his. Who can help but feel that it is better to get rid of an offending member, that it is better to put away a darling sin, than to be exposed to the judgment of One who looks, not at the act, but at the state of heart where it originated.

C. M. How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those that love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word!

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart!

When, free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

1 And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho: and the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,

2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manassch, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,

3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar.

4 And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

6 And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

7 And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.

10 And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,

11 In all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land,

12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

DEUTERONOMY, xxxiv. 1-12.

There is a touching, tender pathos in these words, which tell us of the closing of that remarkable life. One can hardly read them without tears. Moses had given his people a noble example of unswerving integrity, heroic fortitude, and implicit faith in God. Now his life-work was done. The law had been given. The people had been led by a long, circuitous route; kings and people had vanished before them; and only the Jordan rolls between them and the land of promise. The hand of blessing had been laid on faithful Joshua's head. The leader had been told that his feet were not to tread the sacred soil,—his eyes could only look upon it. A voice which he well knew called, “Get thee up into this Mount Nebo, look over the fair land, and die in the mountain.” The old man was yet in the vigor of youth,—its dew was on him; his eye was not dimmed, nor his natural strength abated. When he stood on Pisgah's top, God had lifted every cloud, given to his servant's eye telescopic power, and showed him all the land. The promise had been realized: he had nothing more to do but die. In the fullness of his strength, without weakness or pain, we may well believe the servant of God fell asleep as sweetly as the child in its mother's arms. Is not such a death desirable, glorious? Live a life of faith and obedience, and you will die the death of the righteous.

C. M. Death cannot make our souls afraid,
If God be with us there;
We may walk through its darkest shade,
And never yield to fear.

I could renounce my all below,
If my Redeemer bid;
And run, if I were called to go,
And die, as Moses did.

16 So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken:

17 And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarhites: and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken:

18 And he brought his household man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

19 And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:

21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord.

24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

JOSHUA, vii. 16-26.

“Alas! in what calamities may one involve a family, a community, a nation, by his sins! and how sure it is that our sins will find us out!” Had not God severely punished Achan, the whole camp of Israel would have been terribly demoralized. God was going to destroy the Canaanites for their fearful sins, and he must keep his own people from falling into sin. To have allowed them to plunder would have defeated all his purpose. Look on that heap of stones, and learn the lesson it teaches! God’s eyes are on all his creatures; and there is not one of all the millions of earth who can utter a wicked word, or do a wrong thing, but he knows it. He says he will punish for it; and if Achan’s fearful death means anything, it means that he will. There was no escape for him. The finger of God pointed him out with unerring precision. It will every sinner. Retribution will track him over seas and continents; and though he may escape the earthly tribunal, he cannot escape the God of justice. He will be arraigned at last at the bar of God: there he will be speechless. His case will be hopeless, unless Jesus becomes his advocate. Secure him, trust him, and all will be well. Neglect it, and we must perish forever.

L. M. O, sinner, hear the heavenly voice!
O, hear the Spirit’s gracious call!
It bids thee make the better choice,
And haste to seek in Christ thine all.

God’s Spirit will not always strive
With hardened, self-destroying man;
Ye who persist his love to grieve,
May never hear his voice again.

6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

9 That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.

10 For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

13 This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.

14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself:

19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

20 Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

PSALMS, xlix. 6-20.

The hearts of men are so fully set within them to glorify riches as the one desirable good, that they need often to be reminded of their mistake. Wealth cannot buy happiness. Let death call for some member of our family, and gold will not bribe the destroyer; or let him lay his icy fingers on our own heart-strings, and silver will not buy him off. He cannot redeem his brother; nor will wealth purchase for him an imperishable name. He may give his name to his lands, and hope his building will stand; but a few generations remove all traces of him. He may be highly honored; but he must die, and leave all to others. Death consumes them and their beauty alike. The thirst for riches is an ever increasing one, never satisfied. How can a man be happy who has an insatiable thirst? Think of it. We can carry none of it with us to the other shore. It will build us no mansion in heaven. It cannot buy a soft bed in hell, nor even water for a parched tongue. Life is brief; eternity is long. Faith in God secures an eternal mansion for the soul among the blest, and a robe of righteousness suitable to be worn there.

7s & 6s. Time is winging us away
To our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day,
A journey to the tomb:
Youth and vigor soon will flee,
Blooming beauty lose its charms;
All that's mortal soon will be
Enclosed in death's cold arms.

Time is winging us away
To our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day,
A journey to the tomb:
But the Christian shall enjoy
Health and beauty soon above,
Far beyond the world's alloy,
Secure in Jesus' love.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good-will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the

fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

PHILIPPIANS, i. 15-28.

Paul says, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He could not always say that. But from that midday hour at Damascus, Christ became the one object of life. From the moment of the new birth, man begins to live to Christ. Jesus so completely wins the believer's love, that his heart beats only for him. These words imply that the aim and end of Paul's life was Christ,—nay, his life itself was Jesus. In the words of an ancient saint, "he did eat, and drink, and sleep eternal life. Jesus was his very breath, the soul of his soul, the heart of his heart, the life of his life." "To die is gain," for the more would he enjoy Christ's presence. His sufferings would end; earth would be exchanged for heaven; an earthly prison for a heavenly mansion; prayer for praise; afflictions for eternal glory. Can we say as much? Have we written "For Christ" over our business, whatever it may be; our home duties; over all our acting, thinking, speaking; our eating, drinking, pleasures, *everything*? A true Christian can have no other object in life. "This alone is the true life of a Christian." All summed up in one word — Christ Jesus. When such a life has been lived, to die will indeed be gain. The end of such a life will be peace; its future all-glorious.

P. M. None but Christ. His merit hides me;
He was faultless; I am fair.

None but Christ. His wisdom guides me;
He was outcast; I'm his care.

CHORUS. — Come, ye heavy-laden,
Come to him for rest;
None but Christ can save you;
Who come to him are blest.

None but Christ. His Spirit seals me,
Gives me freedom, with control.

None but Christ. His bruising heals me,
And his sorrow soothes my soul. **CHO.**

None but Christ. His life sustains me,
Strength and song to me he is.
None but Christ. His love constrains me;
He is mine, and I am his. **CHO.**

1 Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeling therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11 Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

HEBREWS, iv. 1-14.

The Holy Spirit knows well how to give exhortations. This one begins with fear, but ends with confidence. God appeals to every motive that will stir the heart, for he is intent on our salvation. He shows us our sins and perils, that we may haste to the refuge. We are warned against self-confidence, against being satisfied with our present privileges or attainments. The Jesus of verse eight means Joshua, who led them to Canaan's rest after many conflicts. But that rest was not lasting, as no earthly rest can be. Trials and conflicts awaited them in the promised land. The true rest was before them in the heavenly Canaan; this is promised every believer. Who can conceive the great change between earth and heaven? Here is toil and weariness: in that land of the immortal, fatigue is unknown. Though he never wearies of his labor, he often wearies in it; but this day of weariness will soon end, and his sun will rise again in that land where they serve God day and night, yet rest from their labors. The rest here is partial; there it is perfect, it is eternal. Here is change, mortality. "There everything is immortal: the harp abides untrusted, the crown unwithered, the eye undimmed, the voice unfaltering, the heart unwavering." Let us make no mistake about entering on that Eternal Sabbath.

C. M. With joy we meditate the grace
Of our High Priest above:
His heart is full of tenderness,
His bosom glows with love.

He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears,
And in his measure feels afresh
What every member bears.

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

12 But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you:

14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet.

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

2 PETER, ii. 10-22.

These are fearfully suggestive words. God leaves us without excuse if we heed not his admonitions and warnings. Fearful is the guilt, and terrible will be the punishment of those who are guilty of the sins here described. Sensuality and a proud disregard of human authority. What multitudes are here included! It is, probably, Christ's authority that they malign. Yet holy men do not speak evil of wicked rulers; and Michael, the archangel, would not rail against Satan even. These sensual ones use their false doctrines as a cloak for sensual indulgence. Full of corruption, they lead astray those who are not established in the truth. They forsake the right way, loving the wages of unrighteousness. They are deceitful wells and clouds; they speak swelling words, and allure into sin those who are trying to live holy lives. They promise liberty, though they are the slaves of corruption. Having heard of Christ and salvation, and been almost persuaded by the Spirit to believe in Jesus, they turn back, and show their vile nature. How much better for them never to have heard of Christ! Such as these, the heathen will rise in judgment to condemn, since they sin against greater light and knowledge. Reader, be careful not to sin against the great light that now shines. "There is a sin unto death." Seek cleansing and salvation. The day of wrath hastens.

S M. And canst thou, sinner, slight
The call of love divine?
Shall God with tenderness invite,
And gain no thought of thine?

Wilt thou not cease to grieve
The Spirit from thy breast,
Till he thy wretched soul shall leave
With all thy sins oppressed?

3 The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name.

4 Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.

5 The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.

6 Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

7 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.

8 And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

9 The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

10 Thou didst blow with thy wind, the

sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

11 Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

12 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

13 Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

14 The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina.

15 Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

EXODUS, xv. 8-16.

Israel could well afford to sing a song of praise. God had done great things for them, such as no other people had ever witnessed. Their enemies had been swept from the earth. Everything seemed to tremble because of this display of God's power. "Praise is comely." It is fitting that those who are the constant recipients of his grace and benefits should hymn his praise. No man lives who does not receive daily mercies from God; and if his heart is right, he will not be wanting in praise. They praised God as "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." Holiness is that attribute which angels adore, and it was manifested in the destruction of Pharaoh. Holiness is hatred of sin and rebellion. Long had he borne with them, and often had they provoked him to anger. At length their cup of iniquity was full; and justice, which is holiness in action, could forbear no longer. Mercy is God's treasure, and holiness is his honor. Justice to his people called for the destruction of their enemies. What wonders of grace and power were displayed in saving Israel, and destroying his enemies! Equally wonderful displays of mercy and love is God making before our eyes daily. The saving of a soul is a miracle of grace. It is a greater display of God's perfections than calling worlds out of nothing, dividing seas, or rolling back the tide of waters ingulping mighty hosts. Has he saved us? Let us praise him while we have breath.

Ss & 6s. When we pass through yonder river,

When we reach the farther shore,
There's an end of war forever;

We shall see our foes no more:
All our conflicts then shall cease,
Followed by eternal peace.

After warfare, rest is pleasant:

O how sweet the prospect is!
Though we toil and strive at present,
Let us not repine at this:
Toil, and pain, and conflict past,
All endear repose at last.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses;

10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into a house, salute it.

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

MATTHEW, x. 5-20.

Our Lord commissioned his disciples to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Jesus had a very tender concern for Israel; they were beloved for the Father's sake. Lost sheep! so much in need of a shepherd; and he had come to be the shepherd, who should gather them out of the ways of sin and error, where they were now straying, and if not soon recovered, must hopelessly wander forever. *Lost sheep!* How truly this describes the sad condition of all who are not in Christ's flock. No shepherd, no fold, and the dark night of death is coming on. Dear Jesus, take me into thy flock, and keep me with a tender shepherd's care. The Messiah has come. The kingdom sung by poets, predicted by prophets, longed for by the pious of all the ages, is at hand. Hosanna to the King! Jesus endues his disciples with power to work all kinds of miracles. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Divine saying, divinely said, — an apple of gold in a setting of silver. Who can estimate what the world owes to such a saying? Coming with such a message, fearful will it be for the city or house that receives them not. To you, lost one, Jesus daily sends the invitations of his love. What will be your doom, if you turn a deaf ear to his gracious words!

L. M. "Go, preach my gospel," saith the Lord;

"Bid the whole earth my grace receive;

He shall be saved that trusts my word,

And he condemned who'll not believe.

"Teach all the nations my commands;

I'm with you till the world shall end;

All power is trusted in my hands;

I can destroy, and I defend."

15 And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.

16 And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

17 And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.

18 And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the noise of them that sing do I hear.

19 And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.

20 And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

21 And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?

22 And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief.

23 For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

24 And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

25 And when Moses saw that the people were naked, (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies,) Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side: let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

EXODUS, xxxii. 15-26.

We cannot read these words without profound amazement and wonder. How clearly they show the depth of the fall! Hardly one month had passed since God had commanded the people to make no idols; yet here they are, dancing before a golden calf! Moses had been beholding the glory of God on the mount, and receiving the tables of stone, and yet a few hours afterward became so angry that he dashed those tables to pieces beneath the mount. A person with a violent temper has need of great watchfulness. Aaron, like all who do wrong, offered a poor excuse for making that calf. A line was soon drawn, and all who would avow themselves on God's side, to do God's work, were requested to come over to Moses. So God now asks all who are his to come out, and stand up for him. Reader, are you on the Lord's side? And if so, why are you there? Is it because all the holy, all the good, and all the pure of all worlds and ages, are there? There is every possible reason why you should be on God's side, and none for being anywhere else. Act well, then, your part as a member of the royal family, remembering the Lord's side must conquer. The horse and the rider must go into the deep sea, and the true Israel find their way, through many trials, to the heavenly Canaan.

L. M. Stand up, my soul, shake off thy fears,
And gird the gospel armor on;
March to the gates of endless joy,
Where Jesus, thy great Captain, 's gone.

Hell and thy sins resist thy course;
But hell and sin are vanquished foes;
Thy Saviour nailed them to the cross,
And sung the triumph when he rose.

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who, being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

6 And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh

his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands.

11 They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

HEBREWS, i. 1-14.

It is God who speaks to us, in the Old Testament and the New: but the whole revelation, extending over so wide a range of agencies and through so long a period of time, centered in Christ, by whom, and for whom, all things were made. Every token, title, work, attribute, office, honor of divinity, is here ascribed to Christ. He created the worlds; he upholds the universe; he sits as God upon the throne of eternity; he is worshiped by the hosts of heaven; he is the brightness of the Father's glory. He has spoken to us; has lived among us; has died for us that "he might purge our sins." His angels are our unseen attendants, bearing us up in their hands. For his sake they take the deepest interest in us, and rejoice greatly over every repenting, returning prodigal, as they make all heaven ring with hallelujahs when a believer enters the New Jerusalem. They guard us, guide us, defend us, and will continue to do it, for he remains the same. All created things perish: he changes not. Reader, it is his word you read; his salvation which is offered you; his grace that seeks you; his blood that can cleanse you; his spirit that can renew you; his heaven that opens its gate to you. If you refuse him, how fearful your guilt, how sad the result!

H. M. Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and power,
That ever mortals knew,
Or angels ever bore:
All are too mean
To speak his worth, | Too mean to set
To speak his worth, | The Saviour forth.

Great Prophet of our God,
Our tongues shall bless thy name:
By thee the joyful news
Of our salvation came, —
The joyful news | Of hell subdued,
Of sins forgiven, | And peace with heaven

1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

PSALMS, xxiv. 1-10.

This is a triumphal song. David had captured Mount Zion, and built his capital around it. He was now bringing the ark of God into the city. This was the symbol of the divine presence: the source of his strength, the author of his victory. God had made David king over this hill, and he would consecrate it to the Lord. David regards himself simply as the servant, and would have the King of glory enthroned in Zion. But the gates must be lifted up for such a King to enter. Who shall go in with him? Those who seek his glory in all things. It is *practical* holiness in which God delights. Good works are always the accompaniment of saving faith. Hands that are not clean must be washed in Jesus' blood before they are used in his service. Pure hearts must go with clean hands. "True religion is heart-work." God looks within, and does not simply regard the "outside of the platter." If the heart is not pure, nothing can be clean. It is the pure fountain that sends out healthful streams. Our hearts are the life of our being. It is the pure in heart who are to see God. Look well to this. Remember that God looks to the heart, and desires a holy temple for his indwelling, where he may move to good works. He cannot abide where there is falsehood and deceit. Purity and truthfulness are the essentials of the dwellers in the New Jerusalem. What a glorious day will that be when Christ with his bride shall have his grand reception; when, as he reaches the pearly gates, he shall say, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."

C. M. Lift up your heads, eternal gates,
Unfold, to entertain
The King of glory; see, he comes,
With his celestial train.

Who is this King of glory?—who?
The Lord, for strength renowned;
In battle mighty—o'er his foes
Eternal Victor crowned.

Lift up your heads, eternal gates,
Unfold, to entertain
The King of glory; see, he comes
With all his shining train.

Who is this King of glory?—who?
The Lord of hosts renowned;
Of glory he alone is King,
Who is with glory crowned.

1 Preserve me, O God : for in thee do I put my trust.

2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee;

3 But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

5 The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup : thou maintainest my lot.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

PSALMS, XVI. 1-11.

Here is the secret of a happy life. We should listen attentively to this instruction, for here is put before us what the majority of mankind are seeking all their lives to find,—how to be happy. What is this secret? It is living in the Lord's presence always, trusting him, seeing him everywhere and in everything. Every creature must be the mirror of the Creator. Make one day wholly the Lord's, and then repeat that day all your life. See God in the morning light, in raiment, in food, in business. Let God's glory be made the one object of life. So did Jesus. In doing all the good to men he could, he knew that he was seeking God's honor. In every thought, every word, every deed, God was before him; and for him he lived, walking so as to please him. Can there be such a recipe for happiness as this? We may add much by remembering that, "Thou God seest me," is true of every moment of our lives. We can do nothing that he does not see. If we are doing all things for him, how will this magnify our peace! "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." "We that have believed do [not *shall*] enter into rest, as he said." This is rest *in* labor and toil, not *from* them. This is rest now, and leads to rest in heaven. Following a life of nearness to God because of delight in him, he will become a source of perpetual joy. In God's presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

C. M. Behold, I come with joy to do
The Master's blessed will;
My Lord in outward works pursue,
And serve his pleasure still.

Rejoicing in my Lord's commands,
I choose the better part,
And serve with careful, busy hands,
But peaceful, resting heart.

14

O that the world the art might know
Of living thus to thee,
And find their heaven begun below,
And here thy glory see.

Walking in all the works prepared
To exercise their grace;
They gain at last their full reward,
And see thy glorious face.

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and

in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

ACTS, ii. 1-18.

The promised hour came at last. It was preceded by a ten-days' prayer-meeting. Jesus had promised it, but they had continued asking it. God's great gifts come on a supplicating people when they are in one accord, having entire harmony of feeling, and are offering believing prayer through Christ. The Spirit was not seen, but his presence was felt. A tongue of fire rested on each disciple, and he gave them utterance. It is not surprising that such a commotion was raised. The Spirit always stirs men deeply. He does not now enable men to speak in a strange language, but he does so loosen tongues, and make the speech so to glow with love and zeal, that people are amazed at it. Mockers are to be found always, but God does not withhold his gifts because some will make light of them. God had promised this wonderful day, with his remarkable displays of glory and grace; Jesus had repeated the promise, and this was only keeping the word. They were filled with the Holy Spirit. God has often bestowed this same gift on his people, producing most marvelous results. Is there any reason why all his people may not have this gift even now? This is the Spirit's dispensation, and he waits to come on every believing soul in mighty power, unloosing his tongue, and setting him on fire to speak God's praise.

8s &c, & 4s. Our blest Redeemer, ere he breathed

His tender, last farewell,

A Guide, a Comforter, bequeathed

With us to dwell.

He came in tongues of living flame,

To teach, convince, subdue;

All-powerful as the wind he came,

As viewless too.

1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

ISAIAH, lxxi. 1-12.

What a pen picture is here given us of Jesus! A deliverer in the form of a sufferer. How that beautiful face is marred by suffering, so as completely to disguise its beauty! Why was he despised and rejected, one from whom men hid their faces as a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief? We may well ask this question, for in its true answer we all have a deep personal interest. He might have come in the style of a royal deliverer. Why then did he come in such a lowly guise? Because our griefs and sorrows were a burden too great for us to bear; hence he took them, and was crushed to earth by them. He bore those wounds and stripes to shield us. But for this, what an eternity of grief and anguish would have been ours! It was for our healing that he gave his back to the smiters. Can we look upon him without tears, as he stands before us the mirror of agonizing love? Fair as the lily for innocence, he is red as the rose with the crimson of his own blood; and that blood was for our cleansing. It ought to break our hearts to look upon such a suffering Saviour. Has it broken yours, dear reader, and is your soul melted in deepest contrition? If so, you will see him exalted, enthroned, receiving the homage of millions who will cast their crowns at his feet, and proclaim him "Lord of all."

7s. Weeping soul, no longer mourn;
Jesus all thy griefs hath borne;
View him bleeding on the tree,
Pouring out his life for thee;
There thy every sin he bore;
Weeping soul, lament no more.

Cast thy guilty soul on him,
Find him mighty to redeem;
At his feet thy burden lay,
Look thy doubts and fears away;
Now by faith the Son embrace,
Plead his promise, trust his grace.

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your h^{is}es:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

2 PETER, i. 16-21.

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their ungodly deeds:)

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

2 PETER, ii. 1-9.

The doctrine of Christ's second coming is one of the fundamental truths of the New Testament. It was but natural that the early Christians, in their intense longing for his return, should have misunderstood as to time. They prayed and talked much about it, expecting to see him coming in their day. As the years wore away, and he came not, many questioned if he would come at all, and called the whole thing a delusion. The apostles had much to do in correcting these notions, and refuting the teaching of the apostate. They had heard from Christ's own lips the promise of his coming, and they had been witnesses of his glory. Prophecy added its sure testimony. It had foretold his first advent, which his coming fulfilled. Since it was true of this, its statements of his coming in glory and power must be credited. Peter warns his readers against false teachers. These have been the curse of the church in all ages. False prophets in olden times, false teachers in gospel days, have occasioned much trouble. What Peter foretold has long been a fact. Just such men have been proclaiming such falsehoods for ages, — denying the Lord, saying there is no judgment, no eternal punishment. The punishment of fallen angels, a doomed world, and burning Sodom and Gomorrah, all declare the doom of the wicked. A holy God must be *just*. Sin must be punished. God will reward, and he will punish. Then seek safety in Jesus.

C. M. That awful day will surely come,
Th' appointed hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.

O, tell me that my worthless name
Is graven on thy hands;
Show me some promise in thy book,
Where my salvation stands.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierc'd themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep this commandment with-

out spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

20 Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called;

21 Which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY, vi 6-21.

"To desire to be rich is a great temptation; to resolve to be rich is a fearful peril. None are ever denounced in the gospel for having riches; but such are warned against making riches their trust." Sad results are seen to follow if gold controls the heart. "Hence the rich are admonished to cultivate the sense of dependence upon God, and save themselves from corruption and apostasy by giving freely to all good causes." When the desire for riches becomes the absorbing passion of the heart, it is sure to be the root of a multitude of evils. The determined purpose to be rich is almost sure to lead to destruction. "No sin is more dangerous than covetousness." A life of faith is the correction of this evil. Faith teaches us that this life is of little value compared with the future one. It tells us that God is the rewarder of all who seek him. It makes us content with such things as we have, showing us that a "contented mind is a continual feast." We are exhorted to maintain this noble conflict of faith, since its prize is eternal life. God will give us all we need for enjoyment and highest good. The healthiest and safest life is the life of faith.

H. M. Fight the good fight! lay hold
Upon eternal life;
Keep but thy shield — be bold!
Stand through the hottest strife:
With thy great Captain on the field,
Thou canst not fail unless thou yield.

Great words are these, and strong;
Yet, Lord, I look to thee,
To whom alone belong
Valor and victory:
With thee, my Captain, in the field,
I must prevail — I cannot yield!

1 O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

2 Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

3 O Lord my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy;)

5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honor in the dust.

6 Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.

7 So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

8 The Lord shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.

9 O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

10 My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

12 If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

14 Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

15 He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.

16 His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

17 I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness; and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high.

PSALMS, vii. 1-17.

Praying to be saved from his foes, David protests his uprightness, entreats God's judicial interference, and expresses his firm reliance on God's retributive justice, which will turn the plots of the wicked against themselves, and call forth the praises of the righteous. He had many sore trials, suffered much from the great envy and wickedness of men, and appealed to God for justice. He made no claim to sinlessness, but was guiltless of these charges, and hence could strongly profess his innocence. Happy is the man whose upright walk enables him to look to God for his vindication. Our enemies can do us no lasting injury, if we are walking humbly before God, and living the life of trust. We may be calm under injuries and wrongs, waiting patiently for the Lord to make everything right. He is holy, therefore just; and will certainly punish the wicked, while he will preserve and reward the righteous. But he will take his own time and his own way. He tries hearts, and is the defence of the upright. Is this God your God; and are you trusting him wholly? There is every reason why you should. If you are Christ's, you are dear to God for the Beloved's sake. No good thing will he withhold from you; but all his power, wisdom, and grace are engaged to help you. We may well praise the Lord for his goodness; and sing praise to the name of the Lord most high.

C. M. God is a spirit, just and wise;
He sees our inmost mind;
In vain to heaven we raise our cries,
And leave our hearts behind.

Nothing but truth before his throne
With honor can appear;
The painted hypocrites are known
Through the disguise they wear.

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.

3 Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 TIMOTHY, iii. 1-17.

We can hardly read such words as these, without exclaiming, Can those who are nominally Christians be guilty of these sins? But it is so, for they have the "form of godliness." Their names are on church-books; they observe days, and seasons, and fasts; but the gospel has no power over their lives; grace has never transformed them. They go on in sin; die in false security; and only wake to find themselves where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Such are hard times for sincere and consistent Christians. They must expect opposition, and to be called fanatical by these professors. All who would live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution in some of its forms. It may not call for blood, but will demand what to refuse will cost constant self-denial, great boldness of faith, and firm reliance on divine grace. But grace is equal to all needs, and the Lord will deliver the obedient child. The inspired Scriptures are a complete treasury of profitable doctrines, where we may find instruction, and reproof, and correction of all that is wrong. The perilous times have come, and it becomes us to be diligent students of this divine word, that we may test our professions by its perfect standard, and mould our lives by its living truths, so that we may make no fatal mistake, to the ruin of our souls.

L. M. The fearful soul that tires and faints,
And walks the ways of God no more,
Is but esteemed almost a saint,
And makes his own destruction sure.

Lord, let not all my hopes be vain;
Create my heart entirely new,—
Which hypocrites could ne'er attain,
Which false apostates never knew.

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen :

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God :

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the

Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey.

13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon Zeleotes, and Judas the brother of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

ACTS, i. 1-14.

“The bodily ascension of Jesus certified him as the Son of God, and lifted our humanity to a place in heaven.” He took special care that there should be no doubt about his resurrection. He showed himself many times, and gave every possible evidence to his chosen witnesses. Doubting Thomas was most thoroughly convinced, and so were they all. His ascension completed the resurrection, answered to the incarnation, and proved that Christ was the Lord from heaven. “It prefigured also the completeness of man’s redemption in the glorified body. It was the man Christ Jesus who ascended. He did not vanish like an apparition; he was not spirited away; he rose in his proper body, with his hands stretched out in blessing; he rose from the ground, where he stood among his disciples, into the air above them, and continued rising until lost to their view. They saw where he had gone, and stood steadfastly gazing after him. He carried up with him his human identity,—‘the same Jesus,’ here and there.” What precious facts are these! Our hearts ought to glow with love and joy, as we read these truths. There is no room for the shadow of a doubt. Jesus rose from the dead: he ascended to heaven. Blessed pledge that we shall follow him if we are his! This same Jesus will come after all his, that they may see his glory, and dwell forever with him.

L. M. Lord, when thou didst ascend on high,
Ten thousand angels filled the sky;
Those heavenly guards around thee wait,
Like chariots, that attend thy state.

Raised by his Father to the throne,
He sent his promised Spirit down,
With gifts and grace for rebel men,
That God might dwell on earth again.

2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.

4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord;

8 As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord;

10 Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

11 For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.

EZEKIEL, xxxiv. 2-15.

God here brings a grievous charge against the rulers of his people. It is applicable to temporal or spiritual leaders, or shepherds. It shows that God is no respecter of persons, but condemns sin wherever he finds it, in ruler or subject, high or low. It should have been their special care to look after the flock; providing food for them, leading them into good pastures, by the side of cool, refreshing waters. But they neglected their high trust, and thought only of themselves, fleecing the flock for their own comfort and ease. For this, God threatens sore punishment. They shall be driven from their position, and left without a flock. They shall no longer feed upon their flock, for God will be against them. But he will be very tender of the flock; will himself do the work of these false shepherds; will gather his sheep; restore every one from his wanderings; and feed them with the best of food, and care for them very tenderly. The shepherd has a most responsible position, and should seek for grace and wisdom to discharge his duties. He must be self-denying, ever thoughtful of the flock, tender and watchful, seeing that every one is well provided with suitable food. What love God shows for his people! Though human rulers may be careless, he will be faithful. Blessed is every one who can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

C. M. 'Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands.

15

They watch for souls, for which the Lord
Did heavenly bliss forego,—
For souls, which must forever live,
In rapture or in woe.

1 A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

2 It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

6 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity.

7 Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

8 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

12 For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

13 Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

16 Be not righteous over-much, neither make thyself over-wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?

ECCLESIASTES, vii. 1-16.

Surely we live in a changeable world. We need no instruction to establish this. All the good of life is the result of God's interposition and favor. All events, and all the actions of men, are under the surveillance and guidance of a Being who is wise and good. God has prescribed bounds to all things, which we can neither enlarge nor diminish. The tide ebbs and flows, the seasons move in a circle: when the circle of events has been gone over, it is renewed, so that we may have confidence in Providence. Hence, to every thing there is a season. Wonderful is the harmony and beauty of all this orderly working; but God must give us an eye to see it. While all these arrangements secure the glory of God, they are for man's good. God had the happiness of his creatures in mind when he planned and created. In harmony with God's purpose, we should study to do good, and so be happy. How essential is this divine arrangement to our well-being! We question and stumble; but our good could be secured in no other way. History repeats itself. What has been, will be again. The times are not worse than other times have been. Our disappointments are not greater than others. We are to be joyful in prosperity, considerate in adversity, trustful in God always. Since death ends this life, let us prepare for another.

L. P. M. As every day thy mercy spares,
Will bring its trials and its cares,
O Saviour, till my life shall end,
Be thou my counsellor and friend:
Teach me thy precepts, all divine,
And be thy great example mine.

When each day's scenes and labors close,
And wearied nature seeks repose,
With pardoning mercy richly blest,
Guard me, my Saviour, while I rest;
And as each morning sun shall rise,
O lead me onward to the skies.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

GALATIANS, iii. 16-29.

The system of grace, in the Old Testament and the New, is the same. The gospel is older than the law by hundreds of years. God's covenant with Abraham, to bless all nations in his seed, looked forward to Christ. But a long time intervened between the giving of the promise and its fulfillment in Christ's advent. So the law was brought in as a measure of discipline and education for the gospel. The real purpose of the law was to lead to Christ, just as the Roman father made one of his slaves the child-leader to guide and guard his son on the way to school. The commands of the law show the weakness of man's efforts in attaining a righteous character. The sacrifices crystallized in men's thoughts and language the idea of an atonement. But when the Master had opened the gospel school, and taken charge of the child, the leader — the law — was no longer necessary. It had served its purpose, and was done away with. Let us put away all thought of salvation by the works of the law. God had no such idea in giving it. It was simply to show men their need of Christ. We can become the seed of Abraham, the true children of God, only by faith in Christ. All who believe are such. Faith may be weak or strong. We may be like Peter and Paul, or very weak; but the weak Christian is as much a child of God as the strong and valiant one.

L. M. The Lord of Hosts, the God most high,
Who quits his throne on earth to live,
With joy we welcome from the sky,
With faith into our hearts receive.

The Christ, by raptured seers foretold,
Filled with the Holy Spirit's power,
Prophet, and Priest, and King, behold!
And Lord of all the world adore.

1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons :

2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ :

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; insasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment :

10 That ye may approve things that are

excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

PHILIPPIANS, i. 1-18.

Paul was a model minister and Christian. He could safely say to his brethren, "Follow me as I follow Christ." He preached Christ; his letters were full of Christ, and so was his conversation. He had great love for his brethren, thought much about them, prayed often for them. He confidently expected that God would complete the work he had begun in them. They were participants of the same grace, disciples of the same Jesus, children of the one Father; and Paul believed he should meet them in glory. He carried them in his heart, and longed to have love abound in them, that they might choose the best things, and be filled with the fruits of righteousness. What an example is here for every Christian! Alas, that there should be so little brotherly love manifest among Christ's people! Christians should have marked affection and tender love for each other, bearing one another in the heart, praying often, and in all ways seeking each other's well-being. Once the saying was common, "See how those Christians love one another!" Why so uncommon now? Paul refreshed them with his experience. They were sad at his imprisonment, and thought it strange; but he says, God meant it for good. It had emboldened other preachers, and so Christ was the more widely known. Dark as the event seemed, God's glory was thereby advanced. We must not judge beforehand. Our trials will not harm us: they may honor God.

C. M. Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take:

The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,

But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

1 And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment?

2 Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;

3 Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.

4 Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

5 Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him:

6 Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

7 Then shall the scers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.

8 But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

10 They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.

12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

MICAH, iii. 1-12.

God is a righteous Judge. He is impartial, and his judgment is according to truth. He judges according to the circumstances under which men sin; according to the light and knowledge they have, or might have. The sin of a ruler is much more heinous in his sight than that committed by one in obscure life. So also for a prophet, priest, or minister to sin is a much more fearful thing according to his judgment. Nothing could provoke God's wrath more than for a ruler to pervert judgments, and a prophet to deceive the people. And if judgment proceed on this basis, where are the people who are more guilty in his sight than those in this favored land, who sin against him, and reject his counsels? How many who minister at consecrated altars are crying "Peace," when there is no peace, and telling sinners that there is no judgment, no eternal death, no atoning blood, when God declares with mighty emphasis that he will judge men according to the deeds done in the body; that he will punish with everlasting destruction the incorrigible sinner who refuses the cleansing of atoning blood. O, what light we have! How fearful to shut our eyes against it! What facilities for knowing the way of life; how sad if we do not avail ourselves of them! Jerusalem's sinners were fearfully guilty for crucifying God's Son, but our sins are greater.

L. M. Behold a stranger at the door!
He gently knocks, has knocked before,
Has waited long, is waiting still;
You treat no other friend so ill.

Admit him ere his anger burn,
His feet departed ne'er return;
Admit him, or the hour's at hand
You'll at his door rejected stand.

1 I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

3 O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

6 This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

8 O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

9 O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

16 The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saith such as be of a contrite spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

22 The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate. PSALMS, xxxiv. 1-22.

How often we forget past blessings! David remembered God's repeated deliverances notwithstanding his folly, and declared it in the most public manner, and said he would praise the Lord always. Where is the family, or individual, who has not received from the Lord innumerable blessings? But multiplied mercies become so common that we forget they are the tokens of our Father's constant care and unceasing love. What daily answers to prayers! Where is the devout person who cannot join the king in saying, "I cried, and the Lord took away my fears." Every face gets brightened that is closeted with God. The Lord will deliver his people. Sometimes he uses wicked men, sometimes good men; and when these will not do, he sends angels, for he will deliver them. Thus Jacob, and Daniel, and Peter found it. The angel of the covenant follows with his sleepless eye the steps of the humble who wait on God. And if our eyes were not holden, we should see the encampment of his hosts around his redeemed. But the face of the Lord is against all evil-doers, and they shall be cut off, and remembered no more. How does the experience of such men as David teach us that a humble, godly life is in every respect desirable! Godliness is profitable for this life as well as the life to come.

L. M.

With all my powers of heart and tongue
I'll praise my Maker in my song;
Angels shall hear the notes I raise,
Approve the song, and join the praise.

To God I cried when troubles rose;
He heard me, and subdued my foes;
He did my rising fears control,
And strength diffused through all my soul.

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembeth that we are dust.

15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

PSALMS, ciii. 1-18.

The generous soul of David was so full of grateful love, that he could not bear the thought of seeing ingratitude. We need to be very careful about forgetting the showers of blessings that have fallen upon us. Iniquities forgiven; diseases healed; life redeemed from destruction and crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies; a mouth satisfied with good things, and a youth renewed, was something to bless God for. But David was not alone in this experience. Every child of God has a great store of blessings. Let us make a catalogue of our own, and see. Would we measure the mercy of God? Think of the sins he has forgiven, and we will acknowledge that he has been slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. Is the heaven high? It is a scant measure of God's mercy, since he has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. How does a father pity his children? He knows their weakness, and puts no heavy burden upon them; he knows their frailty, and is very careful of them; he knows their ignorance, and kindly instructs them; he knows their lack of judgment, and patiently bears with them. Even so the Lord pities, instructs, bears with, and corrects his children. His pity strengthens. The grave and flowers feebly picture our frailty.

S. M. O, bless the Lord, my soul;
His grace to thee proclaim;
And all that is within me, join
To bless his holy name.

O, bless the Lord, my soul;
His mercies bear in mind;
Forget not all his benefits;
The Lord to thee is kind.

He will not always chide;
He will with patience wait;
His wrath is ever slow to rise,
And ready to abate.

The Lord forgives thy sins,
Prolongs thy feeble breath;
He healeth thine infirmities,
And ransoms thee from death.

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

EPHESIANS, iv. 1-16.

God desires unity, steadfastness, and growth in grace. The figure is that of the body, where is perfect unity, all working together for the good of the whole, and thus securing what is best for each part. Christ is the head of his church; and his love shed abroad in the members should secure unity of purpose and effect. God is aiming at completeness in this body: deformity is hideous; hence, he seeks perfection. His gifts have this aim. Paul would have his brethren fall in with this idea, and strive together to secure this desirable perfection. In the body are many members, but they all aim at one thing. The church is composed of many persons, and each has his sphere of labor, but all contribute to one object. God desires growth in this body: the child naturally develops into a man. The babe in Christ should grow to spiritual manhood. We are to grow up into him. Jesus seeks to impress this idea of growth upon us. There must be seed-time; but we should look for the harvest, the fruits of the spirit. For this we must live near Jesus, and be much in communion with him. When we walk by his side, sit at his feet, pillow our head on his heart, we shall find we are growing in holiness, love, faith, all graces, and attaining to the full stature of perfect men.

8s & 7s. Lord, thy church is still thy dwelling,

Still is precious in thy sight,

Judah's temple far excelling,

Beaming with the gospel's light.

On the Rock of Ages founded,

What can shake her sure repose?

With salvation's wall surrounded,

She can smile at all her foes.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

22 What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come. 1 CORINTHIANS, xi. 20-34.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper has two special objects: it is a symbol of the sacrifice which Christ made for the sin of the world; and it is a memorial of his death. The broken bread is the symbol of his body broken, and the wine flowing is the symbol of his blood poured out. As a memorial, it is calculated to keep before us vividly the wonderful love of Jesus, in giving his life for us. We should come to the table to remember Jesus. Not to satisfy bodily wants, but for the soul's needs, did Christ institute this supper. The Corinthians had shamefully perverted the ordinance, and made it a substitute for their old pagan feasts; hence the sharp rebuke of Paul. His words were not intended to keep away any who were conscious of personal unworthiness (for who then could come?) but to check the growing evil of regarding it as a social meal, rather than as a sacrament. We should enter into a careful self-examination before coming to the Lord's table, seeking a suitable preparation of heart; but we should remember that Christ intended that this ordinance should remind us of his death for our sins, so that we may continually seek for cleansing. Remembering him, we see all the past as full of his wondrous love. We see him now on a throne of glory, being crowned Lord of all; and we look for his coming when his bride shall say, "Come, Lord Jesus! come quickly."

L. M. "Do this," he cried, "till time shall end.

In memory of your dying Friend;
Meet at my table, and record
The love of your departed Lord."

16

Jesus, thy feast we celebrate;
We show thy death, we sing thy name,
Till thou return, and we shall eat
The marriage supper of the Lamb.

15 And David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.

16 This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the curse of water that was at his bolster.

17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king.

18 And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand?

19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the

children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods.

20 Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

21 Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.

23 The Lord render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the Lord delivered thee into my hand to-day, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed.

I SAMUEL, xxvi. 15-23.

This was the second time that Saul was in David's power, and his life generously spared. What magnanimity! Under the provocation which David had, only divine grace could have kept him from destroying the king. His generous conduct moved the king so deeply that he ceased to pursue him. In his expostulations with Saul, David lays much stress on the fact that he is driven from the worship of his God, his enemies desiring him to serve other gods. David imprecated God's curse on the men who would lead him from the Lord. Great is the wickedness of those who would lead others to do wrong. Yet in what way does the deep depravity of the human heart so often show itself! What persistent efforts are made to lead young converts astray! With what a fiendish spirit is the reformed drunkard pursued by his old companions, bent on his returning to his cup! God will certainly curse such men. David's words touched Saul's heart. He confessed his sin. "I have played the fool." Sinning is playing the fool, and persecuting God's people most unwise. The drunkard knows the penalty of drinking, that his family must suffer, and degradation and ruin are in the cup. Yes, sinning is "playing the fool." It shuts us out of the school of wisdom, and debars us from God's favor. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

C. M. Is this the kind return,
Are these the thanks we owe?—
Thus to abuse eternal love,
Whence all our blessings flow?

'Turn, turn us, mighty God,
And mould our souls afresh;
Break, sovereign grace, these hearts of stone,
And give us hearts of flesh.'

To what a stubborn frame
Has sin reduced our mind!
What strange, rebellious wretches we!
And God as strangely kind!

Let past ingratitude
Provoke our weeping eyes;
And hourly, as new mercies fall,
Let hourly thanks arise.

6 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

8 And the king of Israel called for one of his officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.

9 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne, clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.

10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.

11 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.

12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.

13 And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.

14 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.

15 And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the Lord?

16 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace.

17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?

2 CHRONICLES, xviii. 6-17.

There is something grand in the words of Micaiah. There were many reasons why he should comply with the suggestion of Ahab's messenger. The king wanted a confirmation of the words of his hireling prophets. What gifts were in his hands for the man who pleased him! Prison and death stared him in the face who should displease him. But Micaiah bravely said, "As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak." Noble words, fitting for every servant of God to write on memory's tablet, and a grand example for him to follow. This is an age of disguising God's truth, keeping back some part of it, hesitating to speak plainly and positively. We have need to be careful and thoughtful, lest we fall into this practice. God commands us to be true to him, faithfully declaring his whole counsel. People love smooth things; do not want to hear much about wrath and punishment. Shall God's people ever hesitate to warn men of the fearful consequences of sin? Not if we love our race; not if we love God. It may look as though it would be politic for us to conform to customs, and say nothing of retribution; but we must remember our accountability to the King of kings. He bids us be true, looking to him for our reward. Can we not trust him?

P. M. Dare to do right! dare to be true! Keep the great judgment-seat always in view; Look at your work as you'll look at it then, Scanned by Jehovah, and angels, and men.

Dare to do right! dare to be true! Jesus, your Saviour, will carry you through. City, and mansion, and throne all in sight, Can you not dare to be true, and do right?

1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.

3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.

4 And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Am-miel, in Lo-debar.

5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Am-miel, from Lo-debar.

6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he an-swered, Behold, thy servant!

7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's ser-vant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, Accord-ing to all that my lord the king hath com-manded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

2 SAMUEL, ix. 1-11.

We should seek for opportunities of doing good. The liberal devise liberal things. David remembered the kindness of Jonathan, and wondered if there were any of his relatives to whom he might show kindness for his sake. A son was found who was living in obscurity. The most deserving persons are frequently only found by careful inquiry. The most needy are generally those who have the least to say about it. We need to be judicious in our charities, lest really worthy persons are left to suffer. We should not satisfy ourselves with simply giving to those who ask, but should seek opportunities of doing good to the Lord's needy ones, who are often hid away. The king's kindness to Mephibosheth would seem to illustrate the kindness of Jesus, our God and Saviour, to lost men. David was under covenant obligation to Jonathan. Christ would have been blameless if he had given no thought to the guilty race. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. More than this: to all who receive him he restores the lost inher-itance; yea, far more: takes them to his own home, and feeds them from his own table. All this he has done for you. What are you doing for him?

C. M. Rise, O my soul, pursue the path
By ancient worthies trod;
Aspiring, view those holy men
Who lived and walked with God.

'Twas through the Lamb's most precious blood
They conquered every foe;
To his almighty power and grace
Their crowns of life they we.

Though dead, they speak in reason's ear,
And in example live;
Their faith, and hope, and mighty deeds,
Still fresh instruction give.

Lord, may I ever keep in view
The patterns thou hast given,
And ne'er forsake the blessed road
That led them safe to heaven.

1 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.

6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.

10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13 Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17 And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

PSALMS, xc. 1-17.

Here is one of the oldest poems of the world; yet how true to the conditions of human life in all ages. Who can read it without having his heart thrilled by its simple, tender pathos? Moses, the author of this psalm, had seen the whole generation that left Egypt with him, perish in the wilderness. Those years seemed to him like a dream. A nation had been cut off as grass, which is green in the morning, and cut down at night. They had been swept away as by a flood. In contrast with man's brief existence, he thought of God's eternity. There before him stood those great and high mountains, those everlasting hills, and yet God had generated them. To him a thousand years is but as the remembrance of yesterday, or as the night-watch. Overwhelmed by such thoughts of man's frailty, Moses finds the cause in sin. Death is the penalty of sin. Man's death is the effect of God's displeasure against wrong-doing. The Bible everywhere puts the blame of man's death entirely on himself. The eternity of God, inspiring Moses with awe and humility, gave him hope and confidence. The eternal God can give permanence to our feeble aims and hopes of good; and if we apply our hearts to wisdom, we shall find in him the life everlasting. Reader, there is but a step between you and death. What if you take it to-day?

L. M. Ere mountains reared their forms sublime,
Or heaven and earth in order stood,
Before the birth of ancient time,
From everlasting thou art God.

To us, O Lord, the wisdom give,
Each passing moment so to spend,
That we at length with thee may live
Where life and bliss shall never end.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

MATTHEW, xii. 31-37.

28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be

forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

MARK, iii. 28-30.

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

LUKE, xii. 10.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorcer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

HEBREWS, x. 26-29.

There is a sin that never hath forgiveness. When persons willfully close their minds to the clear revelations of the Spirit that Jesus is the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, they are left to blindness and hardness of heart, if they *persist* in it. Christ calls it "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." The tongue, by its words, reveals a state of heart in deadly opposition to Christ, refusing to receive him as its Saviour. It is not simply attributing Christ's miracles to Satan's agency, but it is the willful rejection of all proof, or light, where the Holy Spirit has made the clearest and most positive demonstrations of Christ's deity and saving work. When committed, it destroys all fear of displeasing God, all anxiety respecting his favor, and makes men blind to their sin, or hardened in it. All unsaved ones are exposed to the commission of this sin; and in this day, when the Holy Spirit is multiplying the miracles of grace on every hand, subduing the hardest hearts, and breaking the most stubborn wills, it is exceedingly dangerous to reject Christ. It was never so easy to commit this sin as now. The accumulating light of more than eighteen centuries is brought by the Holy Spirit to a focus in the sinner's heart. O the danger, the guilt of shutting out that light!

L. M. Stay, thou insulted Spirit, stay,
Though I have done thee such despite,
Nor cast the sinner quite away,
Nor take thine everlasting flight.

Yet O, the chief of sinners spare,
In honor of my great High Priest;
Nor, in thy righteous anger, swear
To exclude me from thy people's rest.

3 And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

4 This day came ye out, in the month Abib.

5 And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month.

6 Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord.

7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.

8 And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.

9 And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt.

10 Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.

11 And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee,

12 That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the male shall be the Lord's.

13 And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

14 And it shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage:

15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem.

16 And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.

EXODUS, xiii. 3-16.

Redemption! Blessed word! Israel's first-born were saved that Passover night. God claimed them as his own. The first-born males of man or beast must be consecrated to him. Ransom is decreed. "If a fit sum, according to the balance of the sanctuary, be paid, the claim shall be remitted, the forfeited progeny shall be free." In this rite we find a clue to one of the Gospel's grandest lessons. It opens the meaning of redemption. It is value on account of payment; a Redeemer receives because of a satisfactory sum paid. "O the sweet wonders of redeeming love!" Sinners are lost property. Sin brought the whole race into spiritual captivity. What grinding servitude! Is there no hope? Yes. "Spare the penitent;" God has found a ransom. Jesus looks on this captive world; he pities; he resolves to redeem it. The price is great,—unmeasured sufferings, a humiliating life and death. But he pays all; redeems with his most precious blood. Believer, see the purchase-price, and know what blessedness is yours. Your soul is free. The resurrection morning? O no! *eternity* alone can manifest your blood-bought blessing. But remember, "Ye are not your own: for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

C. M. All that I am, and all I have,
Shall be forever thine;
Whate'er my duty bids me give,
My cheerful hands resign.

Yet if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my God with zeal so great,
That I should give him all.

1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for into this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant com-

manded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.

12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,

13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, The Lord your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. JOSHUA. i. 1-13.

God would have his servants be of good courage: he does not love timidity. It is very unreasonable for a child of God, heir of his promises, enriched by his abundant grace, to act the part of a crouching slave. He who has been commissioned of God to do his work among men has no occasion for fear. While he is doing it, God will be with him, and his presence insures success. Fear is the child of unbelief. Our Lord does not think lightly of unbelief. He has no love for a sad countenance. He would have us put off the spirit of heaviness, and wear the garment of praise, since he gives innumerable reasons for rejoicing. We cannot endure trials in an heroic spirit, unless we are courageous and full of faith. Faint-heartedness dishonors God greatly. It sets a bad example, and others will be infected with it. A few disheartening words will kill a prayer-meeting, and cast a gloom over the whole day's experience. It is the joy of the Lord which strengthens the believer. This will give him success in conflict, and lighten his labors.

S. M. Arise, ye saints, arise;
The Lord our leader is;
The foe before his banner flies,
For victory is his.
We hope to see the day
When all our toils shall cease,
When we shall cast our arms away,
And dwell in endless peace.

This hope supports us here,
It makes our burdens light;
'Twill serve our drooping hearts to cheer,
Till faith shall end in sight;
Till of the prize possessed,
We hear of war no more;
And O, sweet thought! forever rest
On yonder peaceful shore.

1 Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For evil-doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of up right conversation. *PSALMS, xxxvii. 1-14.*

Fretting is a very easy thing — a sort of second nature with some people. Specially is this likely to be the case when they look upon those who seem to be more highly favored with the good things of this life than they are. Our selection is very rich in instruction on this point. David's text was, "Be not envious against the workers of iniquity." A practical little sermon he gives us. This enjoyment is only for a short day. Trusting the Lord and doing good is our privilege, with the certainty of having what is best for us. We may delight in God; true religion overflows with happiness. Ungodly persons cannot understand this. To them religion is a series of duties, a hard service; but the believer, who knows Christ, finds nothing so delightful as converse with him. Loving God with all his heart, he finds that his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. "Such joys, such brimful delights, such overflowing blessedness, do the saints find in their Lord, that they would follow him, though all the world cast out his name as evil." Our faith is no fetter, our profession is no bondage: we are not dragged to holiness, nor driven to duty. Piety is our pleasure; hope is our happiness; duty is our delight. *Resting* in the Lord takes away all envious thoughts. It gives calmness and peace; for we know the Lord will bring every good thing to pass, and give us the desire of our heart. Do we know this blessed experience which comes from trusting God for everything? Happy are we! He will make our way prosperous.

P. M. How happy they who know the Lord,
With whom he deigns to dwell!
He cheers and guides them by his word,
His arm supports them well.

His presence sweetens all their cares,
And makes their burdens light;
A word from him dispels their fears,
And gilds the gloom of night.

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High:

12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help.

13 Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.

14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

17 Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

18 Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

19 Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

PSALMS, cvii. 1-19.

This is a song of praise and thanksgiving. It was sung by the returned exiles from Babylon, as an expression of their gratitude. It celebrates the divine goodness in all the circumstances of that auspicious event. The figures which the poet uses are the safe passage through the desert, and arrival in a populous city. How varying their experience! The wilderness was solitary,—no cities,—and there they were, hungry, thirsty, and faint. They cried to God, and were led in a right way to their own city. The divine hand brought deliverance from dungeons; they were sick and nigh unto death, and the Lord raised them up. The occasion of all this trouble was their rebellion against God. If men would learn wisdom by the experience of others, how many sorrows they might be saved! The experience of these exiles is the experience of many of God's people to-day. They have light and darkness, joy and sorrow, peace and trouble. Yesterday on Pisgah's top ravished by the landscape. To-day at the mountain's base: no hope, but many fears; no joys, but many sorrows. Alas, that it should be so! Cease rebelling, trust Jesus, and find the rest which faith can give. Praise the Lord for his goodness. Count up your daily blessings. Think of redeeming love, the cross, the empty tomb, the ascending Lord, who is coming soon to take you to the city of light,

C. M. Israel, rejoice, and rest secure;
Thy keeper is the Lord;
His wakeful eyes employ his power
For thine eternal guard.

He guards thy soul, he keeps thy breath,
Where thickest dangers come;
Go and return, secure from death,
Till God shall call thee home.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

REVELATION, vii. 2-4, 9-17.

Here we have the sealing process,—the angels employed to place a seal on the forehead of every Christian. The earth was not to be destroyed until this seal was put on every one of Christ's children. Reader, would you be willing to have a plain, visible seal placed on your forehead, so that all who see you would say, There is a Christian: see the seal? Would this keep you from any place you are in the habit of visiting now? The number sealed was greater than to have all the population of the earth quadrupled. What a family Christ has to live with him forever! The son of a Broadway merchant, in New York, one day said to his father, "Pa, I don't see any seal on your forehead; why are you not sealed?" The father could not resist that appeal of his son, but sought Christ at once. Are you sealed for heaven? If not, why? When they reached heaven, they were so beautiful John did not know them. Each head wore a dazzling crown, and each form was robed in white. They neither hunger nor thirst any more. Every desire will be fully satisfied. The last tear will be wiped away. O, if there shall remain one unsaved soul on earth, let my last tear be shed over him, and my last moment be spent in prayer for his salvation!

7s. Who are these in bright array,
This exulting, happy throng,
Round the altar night and day,
Hymning one triumphant song?—
"Worthy is the Lamb once slain,
Blessing, honor, glory, power,
Wisdom, riches, to obtain
New dominion every hour."

These through fiery trials trod;
These from great affliction came;
Now, before the throne of God,
Sealed with his almighty name:
Clad in raiment pure and white,
Victor-palms in every hand,
Through their great Redeemer's might,
More than conquerors they stand.

1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

2 PETER, iii. 1-14.

Mankind evince a wonderful readiness to pervert Scripture, and wrest it to their own destruction. Abusing the goodness of God, they make his long-suffering an occasion of sin. Yet this word teaches us that God's forbearance is because he longs for the salvation of men. He would give them space for repentance. Christ's second coming is delayed beyond the expected time of some, not because he is unable to destroy the earth; rather because they have misunderstood the Scripture. The elements of destruction are in the earth, and a breath of his will inflame them. On this account, Peter urges to holy watchfulness and diligence. We are to grow in grace and knowledge. If we are in the divine life, there is a law of growth within us. It is God-inspired, and we have only to remove *obstructions*. See that "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches," do not hinder it. Give it room in the soul. Give it *nourishment*; do not starve it. We may cramp and shrink it. Feed it with the truth. Go over the whole circuit of truth, and find nutriment. Give it *exercise*. Movement is nature's law, the condition of breathing and expanding life.

8s, 7s & 4s.

Day of judgment, day of wonders!
Hark! the trumpet's awful sound,
Louder than a thousand thunders,
Shakes the vast creation round:
How the summons
Will the sinner's heart confound!

See the Judge, our nature wearing,
Clothed in majesty divine:
You, who long for his appearing,
Then shall say, "This God is mine:"
Gracious Saviour,
Own me in that day for thine.

10 So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

11 And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

12 And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments:

13 But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

14 And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the

riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so?

16 And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee?

17 And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people.

18 And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

JUDGES, xiv. 10-18.

The story of Samson and his wonderful exploits illustrates the fact, that when God is with any of his chosen servants, it is easy "for one to chase a thousand, or two to put ten thousand to flight." Christianity, in these centuries, has wonderfully elevated the moral tone of society. What might have been proper for Samson would be inexcusable in a Christian now. He was a man chosen of God to punish the Philistines for the wrongs they had done to Israel; and their conduct at his marriage furnished him a good excuse for inflicting on them the evils which he did. It was necessary for his parents to go with him to Timnath, because matrimonial arrangements in the East are made by parents. At wedding-feasts it was very common to while away the time by proposing riddles, promising rewards for the solution, and exacting forfeits for failure. Samson followed the custom. The riddle was not so very difficult, but for some reason — probably because there was a divine purpose in it — the young men could not explain it. I think the doctrine to be this: If we would have the real strength and sweetness of religion, we must meet and overcome difficulties. In other words, if we have the honey, we must kill the lion.

C. M. God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain

3 And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in:

5 For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.

6 Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedars?

7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel:

8 And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.

9 Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall

dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning,

10 And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that the Lord will build thee a house.

11 And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

12 He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever.

13 I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee:

14 But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

15 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. 1 CHRONICLES, xvii. 3-15.

It speaks well for David that he saw the impropriety of his dwelling in a cedar palace, while the ark of the covenant had only a curtained tabernacle. God's house should always correspond to the circumstances of the worshippers therein. But it did not accord with the divine plan that the warrior-king should build the sanctuary. It was more fitting that a man of peace should erect a temple for the worship of the Prince of Peace. But if God did not permit David to build the house, he honored him for his wise and pious thought, and graciously accepted his good purpose. It is given to many of God's servants to plan wise things, and begin noble undertakings, while it is left to others to complete them. Moses brought Israel within sight of Canaan, but it was reserved for Joshua to put them into possession of it. God's kingdom is built up by a succession of workers, for no one man can do everything. We are workers together: one gathers the material, another lays the foundation, another builds the walls. One does the solid work, another the adorning, and all is accepted of God. Each has his reward. We do well to plan great things for God, and execute them as far as he permits, confident always that he will allow no one to plan or toil for naught.

L. M.

Thy priests shall feel its quickening power,
Thy people catch the rising flame;
While all confess, to time's last hour,
Jehovah here records his name.

Thus here, O God, our offering lies,
Cold in its beauty—cold and dead!
O living fire—burst from the skies—
On us thy hallowing influence shed.

14 And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.

15 And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt-offering, while I meet the Lord yonder.

16 And the Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

17 And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the Lord spoken?

18 And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:

19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

20 Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.

21 He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob,

neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.

22 God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of a unicorn.

23 Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!

24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

25 And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.

26 But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do?

27 And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.

NUMBERS, xxiii. 14-27.

Sadly disappointed, Balak was not satisfied. The enemies of the church are unwearied in their efforts to ruin her. They leave no place untried that promises success. A new position, with new altars, new sacrifices, accomplishes nothing. Happy Zion, what a favored people! God is in her midst, and no weapon can harm her. Again the curse was turned into a blessing. Balak was assured that he could not hope to ruin Israel. God, unlike man, is unchangeable. He recalls no promise. His plans are perfect, hence unchanged. When in Scripture God is said to repent, no change of *mind* is intended, only a change of *way*. This was Israel's security, its one hope. God had blessed, and nothing could change it. He would permit no injury to Jacob. Not but that there was sin enough, but it was not such a crying evil as the worship of the golden calf. God will permit no real evil to be done to his church, as what is done against her is done against him. Balak is plainly told that God is with his people, and divination and enchantment are useless. God can and will baffle all the plottings of the wicked from harming his people. His church cannot be destroyed; but her enemies shall be overthrown, and terrible will be their ruin.

C. M. O, speed thee, Christian, on thy way,
And to thy armor cling;
With girded loins the call obey
That grace and mercy bring.

There is a battle to be fought,
An upward race to run,
A crown of glory to be sought,
A victory to be won.

1 Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
 2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

4 Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

6 Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

8 Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

11 For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.

12 What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

14 The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

15 Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

PSALMS, XXV. 1-22.

David, as king, was a conspicuous object of malice and hatred. No man can receive the marks of divine favor without arousing the envy and jealousy of others. David turned to God as his only hope against such foolish rage. We may not have bitter enemies, but if we live godly lives in Christ Jesus, we shall have opposition, and God alone can help us to overcome it. He is a sure refuge in distress. But David's sins were a sorer trouble than even his enemies; hence he is more earnest in asking forgiveness for them than in seeking deliverance from his foes. It is well to take both sorrow and sin to the same place. David went with both to God. We may go to God with our sorrows, for he careth for us. He has counted the hairs of our head. Then he must be the one to go to with all our troubles. We must go to God with our sins. At the cross alone can we get rid of them. The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. David would be taught of God; he wanted experimental teaching, hence he wanted to remain in the Lord's school. The advantages were too great for him to be in haste to graduate. He rather wanted a scholarship, so that he might spend other years there. "Teach me thy way." Is it not to be feared that some of God's people *leave school too soon?*

C. M. O Lord, when billows o'er me rise,
 When deep cries out to deep,
 When angry clouds obscure the skies,
 My soul in safety keep.

Thy promise has in troubles past
 My staff of succor been;
 Support me now, while trials last,
 Nor leave me in my sin.

9 The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness :

10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave : I am deprived of the residue of my years.

11 I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living : I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

12 Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent : I have cut off like a weaver my life : he will cut me off with pining sickness : from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

13 I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones : from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

14 Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter : I did mourn as a dove : mine eyes fail with looking upward : O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

15 What shall I say ? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it : I shall go

softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.

16 O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit : so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness ; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption : for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee : they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day : the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

20 The Lord was ready to save me : therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

21 For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover.

22 Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord ?

ISAIAH, xxxviii. 9-22.

It is a good thing, when restored to health, to remember the thoughts we had in sickness, especially those we had when looking death in the face. To the genuine believer they are not moments of fear or sorrow, yet he will be thoughtful ; and though he rejoices in the hope of soon being with his Lord, he will be serious in leaving loved ones, and unfinished labors. Hezekiah had no heir to the throne : this caused some anxiety ; and many designs of good for his people in restoring the Lord's service, and putting away idolatry, were unfinished. These disturbed him in thinking of death. From these thoughts he turns to devout thanksgivings for his recovery. His prayer had been heard, and his life spared ; it was God's favor. He thinks he will not forget the bitterness of his soul when death was in prospect, but will be thoughtful, walking softly. Have we been down to the gates of death, and made solemn promises, that if God would spare us, we would live an earnest, devoted life of faith ? Have we not said we would forsake every sinful way, and live wholly for Christ ? Have these promises been kept ? Has our daily life been a prolonged thanksgiving for God's goodness ? Or have we put away all our serious thoughts, and forgotten our promises ?

C. M. Thine arms of everlasting love
Did this weak frame sustain,
When life was hovering o'er the grave,
And nature sunk with pain.

18

I calmly bowed my fainting head
On thy dear, faithful breast,
And waited for my Father's call
To his eternal rest.

1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and

thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

MATTHEW, vi. 1-15.

We have now been reading Christ's instructions about praying and giving for the benefit of others. This brief prayer, that we all can repeat, contains everything we need to pray for. We are not to be confined to these words, but in our own way approach God as our Father, whose home and throne are in heaven. We are to ask him to treat us as we treat others; to forgive us as we do others. Are we willing he should? We are to feel a deep interest, and labor with all our might for the spread of the gospel. "Thy kingdom come." Ask God each morning for what we need that day. Can we say, "Thy will be done," if that will crosses our plans, or takes away those we love? Do we pray that God will keep us from every temptation that might overcome us? He has power to do it, and we will give him the praise and glory. We are not to make a great show when we give of our substance, as if we wanted every one to know just how much we give, but to do it quietly, and God will reward us when and as he pleases. Closet prayer is here recommended. Not pray to be seen of men, but to obtain blessings from our Father in heaven; not relying on the repetition of the words we use in prayer. We may go often and linger long if the answer does not come. Jesus prayed three hours, saying the same words. He wanted a particular blessing. "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly." May we be greatly benefited by these instructions.

C. M. Our Father, God, who art in heaven,
All hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come; thy will be done
In heaven and earth the same.

Give us this day our daily bread;
And as we those forgive
Who sin against us, so may we
Forgiving grace receive.

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit, wheresoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters,

in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

2 CORINTHIANS, xi. 18-33.

What a catalogue of sufferings and labors has the apostle here put on record. He was compelled to this glorying. He had no heart for it; but his enemies were boasting so much of what they had done, that he felt that the truth must be told, so that all might see how contemptible their record was when compared to his. What a life of incessant adventure is disclosed to us! How can we so well profit from this narration as by contrasting our own acts and trials with Paul's? We think we have suffered something for Christ's cause: after reading this record, shall we care to speak of it? We have tried to do something for the Master, we think. We have given something for the spread of the gospel, but how insignificant it seems as we read these words! How little self-denial or suffering! Such a record of heroic sufferings and unceasing labors ought to stir our hearts, inspire us with consuming zeal, and send us out to work on the fields of earth. We are not called to such perils and sufferings, thanks to Christianity; but we are called to be diligent workers in the Lord's vineyard. How many fields are uncultivated and spread before us, where faithful toil would be blessed of God with abundant rewards! God grant we may be incited to imitate Paul in his abundant labors.

C. M. We journey through a vale of tears,
By many a cloud o'ercast;
And worldly cares, and worldly fears,
Go with us to the last.

Not to the last! Thy word hath said,
Could we but read aright,
Poor pilgrim, lift in hope thy head;
At eve it shall be light.

8 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

10 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

12 But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his

hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14 And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi:

16 For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

EXODUS, xvii. 8-16.

When our eyes are opened by the Spirit, how are we able to trace the gospel story on every Bible page! God's people are mutual helpers. They are one body, with Christ for the Head. There should be the heartiest coöperation, the deepest sympathy, the warmest love among Christians. The different members of the body have different offices and work. Some go out to fight the Lord's battles; others ascend the hill to pray, as did Moses, Aaron, and Hur; others serve by suffering; but all work together for God's glory in the success of his church. Joshua and Paul were found in the thickest of the fight, receiving the same honor that Moses, Aaron, Hur, and their brethren do, who prevail in prayer. When we work together, success follows. Moses on the hill in prayer tells us of Christ on high interceding for us. But for this we should never prevail, every fight would be defeat. How joyfully then comes the assurance, "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." His every day and hour is ceaseless energy of interceding love. It is this which kindles flames of comfort in our hearts, and decks our faces with smiles, when trials and temptations thicken. The thought inspires peace, and leads to victory. Christ prays because he loves so much, and the Father hears because he loves not less. If we succeed, let us give all the glory to God by inscribing our altar, "The Lord, my banner."

L. M. Prayer is appointed to convey

The blessings God designs to give:

Long as they live should Christians pray;
They learn to pray when first they live.

If pain afflict or wrongs oppress,
If cares distract or fears dismay,
If guilt deject, if sin distress,
In every case, still watch and pray.

"Tis prayer supports the soul that's weak;
Though thought be broken, language lame,
Pray if thou canst or canst not speak,
But pray with faith in Jesus' name.

Depend on him; thou canst not fail;
Make all thy wants and wishes known;
Fear not; his merits must prevail:
Ask but in faith, it shall be done.

4 And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, was allied unto Tobiah:

5 And he had prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.

6 But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king:

7 And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

8 And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

9 Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again

the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense.

10 And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.

11 Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place.

12 Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.

13 And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.

14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof. NEHEMIAH, xiii. 4-14.

God was very particular that Israel should be a separate people. He enjoined it upon them with solemn commands enforced by marked threatenings. This was the only way to keep them from idolatry and kindred evils. Obedience brought them great reward; but disobedience was followed by sore troubles. Not less positive are God's words to his people under the gospel dispensation. We are to come out, to separate ourselves, and live in a holy manner. It would create a great revolution in society if Christians were to live according to Christ's teaching in these matters. Who can question that their moral power would be increased an hundred-fold thereby? "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Is it not difficult to determine how far to form business partnerships with Christ's enemies, thereby entangling ourselves, and exposing ourselves to great temptations? There can be no question that the usefulness and growth in grace of multitudes of Christians are greatly hindered in this way. Christians make great mistakes in not rendering to God the tithes which belong to him. He will withhold his blessing from such. He may allow temporal prosperity to increase, while their souls grow lean. He who would be a hearty, happy, healthful Christian, must render to God his due.

C. M.

Let Zion's watchmen all awake,
And take th' alarm they give;
Now let them from the mouth of God
Their awful charge receive.

"Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands.

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remainteth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness:

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 While by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. 2 CORINTHIANS, ix. 1-15.

We are here instructed how we may give of our substance for Christ's cause, so as to secure the divine blessing. Grace has hard work to make most Christians thoroughly generous in their giving to Christ's cause. With many it never succeeds. Yet there is every reason why a Christian should be a liberal giver. If we sow sparingly, we shall reap sparingly; but if we sow bountifully, we shall reap bountifully. Much wisdom is needed in order to give aright: but God will give us this wisdom. If God gives to us, it is that we may give to his poor, or send the gospel over the world. We must scatter with an open hand, if we would gather a large harvest of joy and blessedness. But this must be done with a willing mind. God loves cheerful giving, and will certainly reward such a giver with an abundance to give. He will be lavish with his treasures to the man he can trust to deal them out with a prudent, generous hand. He gave an unspeakable gift in Christ, and with him he freely gives us all things. This fact should open our hearts and our purses to every call which he makes; and we should seek his love by liberal and cheerful giving. "Freely ye have received, freely give."

C. M. Lord, lead the way the Saviour went,
By lane and cell obscure,
And let our treasures still be spent,
Like his, upon the poor.

Like him, through scenes of deep distress,
Who bore the world's sad weight,
We, in their gloomy loneliness,
Would seek the desolate.

5 But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

6 Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?

7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

8 Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

9 By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

11 The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

12 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,

14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,

17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?

18 Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:

19 How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

20 They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it.

21 Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom.

JOB, iv. 5-21.

Job had been a great helper of others in their troubles; his wise words and comforting thoughts had cheered many a sufferer, and strengthened him to bear his hard trials. But in his dark hour he needed to have some one to comfort him. We are not sufficient of ourselves. Happy are we if we have wise comforters, who can get at the root of our difficulty, and help to remove it. How Job's friends failed! They uttered wise and true words, but they were not applicable to Job's case, hence failed to help him. The Lord Jesus is the true helper, for his sympathy has sustaining power in it. The truly pious may have confidence, and the upright may have hope; for the innocent never do perish, nor are the righteous ever cut off. This is not saying they will not suffer; for there are thorns to pierce the feet of the best, and some of the holiest saints know little but suffering and pain for years. But God has his eyes on them, and he makes the couch of suffering a bed of roses, rich with the fragrance of sweetest perfume. The most exalted spirits — even angels — are imperfect, compared with the infinite perfection of God; how much more so is man! As we are all very imperfect, let us not complain if, in removing the dross, the fires burn fiercely. Jesus knows when to check them, or put them out altogether.

C. M. Dear Refuge of my weary soul,
On thee, when sorrows rise,
On thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies.

To thee I tell each rising grief,
For thou alone canst heal;
Thy word can bring a sweet relief
For every pain I feel.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised;

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

HEBREWS, x. 23-36.

The exhortations of this selection are grounded on the truth that Christ's blood cleanses from all sin. Through Christ we have free access to God, and should avail ourselves of the privilege. We should stir up one another to live according to our Christian profession. We profess to believe that Christ bore our sins in his body on the cross; that God has accepted us in his Son; that Christ is our intercessor; that with him God will freely give us all things. We should never loosen our grasp on these cardinal truths, but should help each other to live as believing them. We must remember that neglect of the gospel will result in irremediable ruin, as it will bring on us the divine wrath. Those who willingly reject Christ's atonement will never find another means of salvation. Apostatizing from Christ is a personal insult to him and the Holy Spirit, an insolent rejection of atoning blood and saving grace. Such guilt merits and will receive God's severest punishment. Have you suffered for Christ? The remembrance of it should be an incentive to continued constancy, since it will receive, in due time, a sure reward. Endurance will have its reward in all promises fulfilled. The Spirit here gives us wise and needful exhortations. Experience must have satisfied us of this need. Blessed results will follow our heeding them; we shall not become apostates, but inheritors of the promises.

L. M. No more, my God, I boast no more
Of all the duties I have done;
I quit the hopes I held before,
To trust the merits of thy Son.

Now, for the love I bear his name,
What was my gain I count my loss;
My former pride I call my shame,
And nail my glory to his cross.

10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

13 And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.

14 And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:

15 And that they should publish and pro-

claim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.

16 So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.

18 Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

NEHEMIAH, viii. 10-18.

There is a time for joy as well as sorrow. No one has such a right to be joyful as the servant of God. The feast of the tabernacles was to be observed with great cheerfulness, and all its appointments were so made as to contribute to joyous feelings. They were to select choice portions of food and drink, and send to the poor. Nothing contributes more to genuine happiness than sharing our good things with the needy. It gives a relish to our own food, and adds to our cheerfulness. The careful hearing of God's word, and a good understanding of the same, intensified the gladness. Theirs was the joy of the Lord, such as comes from him. It was not carnal joy, but holy and spiritual; joy in the goodness of God under the conduct and government of his grace; joy arising from his love and favor. Such a joy will be a source of strength, and fit for further service. The more cheerful we are in our religious exercises, the more we shall abound in them. Holy joy will be oil to the wheels of our obedience. Joy will also nerve us for the conflicts, and arm us against the assaults of our spiritual enemies. Let us be joyful Christians. Keep a happy heart by obedience and trust, and you will wear a smiling face.

L. M. Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me;
His loving-kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruined by the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate;
His loving-kindness, O how great!

19

Though numerous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving kindness, O how strong!

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day,
And sing, with rapture and surprise,
His loving-kindness in the skies.

1 Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of a hireling?

2 As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as a hireling looketh for the reward of his work;

3 So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

4 When I lie down, I say, "When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day."

5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

7 O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.

8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

9 As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth

away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

10 He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

11 Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

12 Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

13 When I say, "My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

14 Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:

15 So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.

16 I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity.

17 What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?

18 And that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?

JOB, vii. 1-18.

We need to use much carefulness of thought in considering such words as these. If we could put ourselves, in imagination, in Job's place, we might better understand these sore complaints and burning words. He had appealed to his friends, but they had pre-judged his case, and believed him a hypocrite. He turned to God and poured out his soul in bitter wailings. "It is the weakness of the flesh appealing to the Almighty to send him the relief which he hoped for in the future state. His protracted suffering, forming a disease that caused him to loathe himself, had so far exhausted his nervous vitality and the spirit of hope, that even the instinct of life had nearly died out within him. Never was a picture more true than this of the weariness of a prolonged sickness, which leaves no hope of life, yet does not bring the relief of death." Dear reader, does God spare you from such terrible experiences? Surely thankfulness should be in your heart and praise on your tongue. Is it not of his mercy, and not because of any goodness in you? Do you think you could have had such sufferings without sin? How is it now? Is there no murmuring, no complaint? or does God often find a repining spirit, a murmuring heart? May God's goodness, even in our sufferings, lead us to penitence, a cheerful hope, and a life of trust.

11s. I would not live alway; I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the
way;

The few lucid mornings that dawn on us here
Are followed by gloom, or beclouded with fear.

I would not live alway, thus fettered by sin—
Temptation without, and corruption within:
E'en the rapture of pardon is mingled with
fears,
And the cup of thanksgiving with penitent
tears.

1 And the famine was sore in the land.

2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their fathor said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food.

3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:

5 But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

7 And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words. Could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

8 And Judah said unto Israel his father,

Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones.

9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:

10 For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

11 And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds:

12 And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight.

13 Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man:

14 And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

GENESIS, xliii. 1-14.

“ Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers them out of them all.” Jacob had many sore trials, but the hardest one was now before him. “ Necessity knows no law,” and want is inexorable in its demands. Jacob must give up Benjamin, or they must all perish. But this hard necessity was full of most gracious designs. In this way the burden of deadly guilt was removed from the house. Judah insisted that it would be of no use to go without Benjamin. We can have no access to God unless we take Jesus. We must use his name. We must carry him in the arms of our faith, or we cannot see the face of God. No prayer avails that is not put on the ground of his merit; no petition will be read that has not his signature. Judah was a lion’s whelp, and his confidence justifies the title. He was courageous. So far as possible, he would take all the responsibility, bear all the blame, or suffer all the consequences. We are called upon to risk everything for the greater good. The brave soul will not shrink from standing in the deadly breach, if need be. The cause of Christ requires us at times to assume great responsibilities.

C. M. Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

Our lives through various scenes are drawn,
And vexed with trifling cares,
While thine eternal thought moves on
Thine undisturbed affairs.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Great God, how infinite art thou!
What worthless worms are we!
Let all the race of creatures bow,
And pay their praise to thee

1 After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

2 And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

3 Then the king's servants which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

9 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.

10 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

13 And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews.

ESTHER, iii. 1-6, 9-13

What bitterness there is in envy! When once it gets possession of a man, there is no telling what atrocious crimes it will lead him to commit. He stops at no wickedness, but willingly involves vast multitudes of innocent ones in ruin, to gratify his malice. Truly, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous, but who is able to stand before envy?" What better commentary could be found on these words of Solomon than our scripture selection? What outrageous cruelty is this which could coolly plot for the destruction of a whole nation because one man refused to bow before him? Yet this is only one instance. Envy instigated the first murder; cruelly persecuted David for years; and perpetrated the most atrocious crimes ever planned and executed on earth. The sun would not look upon it, and all nature seemed shocked by it. We read, "For envy, the Jews delivered Jesus." The seeds of this sin are in every heart, and only the most careful, prayerful watchfulness will hinder its growing to large proportions. Grace alone can prevent its mastering the heart. Root it out; away with it; crucify it; for it should not live in any heart. How wicked and foolish the conduct of Ahasuerus! What a terrible overthrow was Haman's! What would Christians do but for Christ's care?

7s & 4s. Sinner, in the downward road,
How will you do?
You who now contemn your God,
How will you do?
Death will be a solemn day!
When the soul is forced away,
It will be too late to pray!
How will you do?

You who laugh, and scorn, and sneer,
How will you do?
When the trumpet's blast you hear,
How will you do?
Can you then your terrors brave,
Say you have no soul to save,
When you sink beneath the wave?
How will you do?

7 And Elisha came to Damascus; and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither.

8 And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

9 So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria has sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.

11 And he settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.

12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover.

15 And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

2 KINGS, viii. 7-15.

King Benhadad was sick. No rank, or station, or power, is sufficient to keep off sickness or death. Palaces and thrones are as accessible to disease as the cleanly cottage of the humblest peasant. Anxious to know the result of his sickness, Benhadad sends his highest officer with a magnificent present to Elisha. It is remarkable how sickness or affliction will bring men to God, who in health hardly think of him. Men will quickly turn from the world when sickness or trouble comes. In prosperity and health, is not God forgotten by many? Do not wonder, then, that he sends adversity, that riches take wings and fly away, that some member of your family is laid in the grave, or that disease comes upon us. Elisha's reply is a puzzle to critics, though it seems plain. "Your master might recover from his sickness, but will certainly die from another cause." He has a message for Hazael, and accompanies it with such a searching, penetrating, withering look, that Hazael's face crimsoms, while the prophet fell to weeping. Like his lord, he had a prophetic view of evils coming on his people. Hazael protests that he could not be guilty of such base things; but the sequel proved all true. He killed his master, usurped the throne, and slaughtered Israel. So it is with every man who sells himself to do evil.

C. M. Vain are the hopes the sons of men
On their own works have built;
Their hearts by nature all unclean,
And all their actions guilt.

In vain we ask God's righteous law
To justify us now;
Since to convince and to condemn
Is all the law can do.

Let Jew and Gentile silent bow,
Without a murmuring word;
Let all the race of man confess
Their guilt before the Lord.

Jesus, how glorious is thy grace!
When in thy name we trust,
Our faith receives a righteousness
That makes the sinner just.

14 Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation;

15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.

16 To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

17 Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you.

18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord.

19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korahites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

20 And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

21 And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever.

22 And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

23 For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

24 And when Judah came toward the watch-tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

2 CHRONICLES, xx. 14-24.

God hears prayer. While Jehoshaphat and his people were calling, he answered. A great confederate army was invading the land. The devout king proclaimed a fast, and called on God to help them. God encouraged them to trust him. "All things are possible to him that believeth." Truly "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Though he generally works through human agents, he confines himself to no single method, but takes the way which will best convince men that it is by his power, not their might, that they succeed. Generally we must carry our weapons and use them bravely to resist our foes; but here they were only to stand still and see the salvation of God. Never was such an army marshalled and equipped as this was, and never was an enemy so unaccountably destroyed. God used singing for their overthrow. It was God's doing, and marvelous in his people's sight. We have no ground for fear of any foes, however numerous or fierce, when God fights for us. God gives a varying experience. Sometimes we are called to use all our strength and wisdom, and our courage is thoroughly tested. Then again God says, "Stand still, and see my salvation!" In either case, it is God alone who gives us the victory. We have every reason to trust him, and not one for doubting.

8s & 7s.

Praise the Lord, for he hath spoken;
Worlds his mighty voice obeyed;
Laws, which never can be broken,
For their guidance he hath made.

Praise the Lord; ye heavens, adore him;
Praise him, angels, in the height;
Sun and moon, rejoice before him;
Praise him, all ye stars of light.

15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

18 The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth.

22 For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

28 For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

PSALMS, xxxvii. 15-28.

Why should any man complain because of the evil things which come upon him? The occasion of his suffering is in himself. Man is born to trouble because he is born in sin. We need not blame God, and murmuring will only aggravate the difficulty, since it increases our sin. Man has an innate tendency to evil, as sparks to fly upward, hence is ever getting into trouble or suffering from it. What shall he do? Cast himself upon God, whose goodness and greatness are shown in the order of the natural world, and who causes the most happy results to flow from submission to divine chastisements. He is a happy man whom God correcteth, for God designs to bring him into ways of pleasantness and peace, and saves him from the vengeance which would come upon him for his sins. While there is no severity in his chastisements, we must remember that it is against our worst enemies, and these are our sins. To comfort us in our afflictions, he has written down many precious promises and words of consolation. All whom he loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. So all the good have such experiences, by which their hearts are broken and their spirits are made contrite. Thus, light, momentary afflictions bring the most blessed and permanent results, — everlasting happiness and joy. Let us say, then, "It is the Lord; let him do as he will."

S. M. How tender is thy hand,
O thou most gracious Lord!
Afflictions come at thy command,
And leave us at thy word.

How gentle was the rod
That chastened us for sin!
How soon we found a smiling God
Where deep distress had been.

A father's hand we felt,
A Father's heart we knew;
'Mid tears of penitence we knelt,
And found his heart was true.

Now we will bless the Lord,
And in his strength confide;
Forever be his name adored,
For there is none beside.

16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

17 Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in; in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.

18 The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

19 For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red

sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24 And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

25 And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

26 And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

27 And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

EXODUS, xv. 16-27.

A varied experience have God's people. Safe from one trouble, they are soon in others. It is best; they find new tokens of divine favor and love. If God permits them to walk in the midst of troubles, he leads them, cares for, and delivers them. Heavenly leading is always in the right way. But that right way may be sharp with thorns, and rough with difficulties. In the wilderness, and no water. What a check for high hopes! At Marah there is plenty of water, but it is so bitter they cannot drink it. The people turn from God; but Moses flees to him. A remedy is announced; but in giving it, God teaches a useful lesson. He could have caused sweet springs to bubble at their feet. "Faith must trust; obedience must comply; diligence must work; effort must be up and doing." Then if we find bitter waters, we must not murmur. "At every Marah there is a tree whose leaves drop sweetness, and whose taste is balm. Yet the eye of faith alone can touch it." Suffering, poverty, bereavement, are bitter fountains; but Jesus can sweeten all, and does for his trusting ones. His arms of love embrace every suffering disciple. Jesus' love has opened a fountain of sweet waters, and he says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

I. M. There is a great Physician near;
Look up, O fainting soul, and live;
See, in his heavenly smiles appear
Such help as nature cannot give.

See, in the Saviour's dying blood,
Life, health, and bliss abundant flow:
'Tis only that dear sacred flood
Can ease thy pain, and heal thy woe.

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house.

4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after:

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

7 Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in

their heart; and they have not known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

HEBREWS, iii. 1-19.

There is no sin which so dishonors God as unbelief. Jesus warned his disciples against it, and he held it up as the great sin of human nature. His teachings were echoed by his apostles. "Faith is the link of union between our souls and God. It makes him real; it gives us access to him through Christ as our High-Priest; it makes us partakers of Christ in the confidence and rejoicing of hope; it gives reality to heaven as the home which Christ's love has prepared for us." Unbelief robs us of all this. It is the point of departure from God; the beginning of apostasy, the hardening of the heart. Unbelief kept millions of Israelites out of Canaan, and there is no computing the number kept out of heaven by it. It prevents healthful growth, and robs the soul of peace and joy. The most unreasonable, destructive of sins, it is Satan's most useful weapon. God is too good, kind, and faithful to be distrusted. We have every reason to confide in him. He is able and willing to do all he has said. A doubt grieves him; it shuts his hand. There is nothing he will not do for his trusting child. But unbelief compels him to close heaven's gate. Will you remain outside when the gate would fly open at the touch of faith? O, believe and live!

S. M. All yesterday is gone;

To-morrow's not our own;

O sinner, come, without delay,

To bow before the throne.

20

O, hear his voice to-day,

And harden not your heart;

To-morrow, with a frown, he may

Pronounce the word, "Depart."

1 O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

2 O that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

3 And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord.

4 Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders.

5 And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

6 Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts,

Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

8 Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait.

9 Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that none can pass through them; neither can men hear the voice of the cattle: both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.

11 And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.

12 Who is the wise man, that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

JEREMIAH, ix. 1-12.

The sorrows of his people touched the heart of the prophet. He felt that he would gladly pour out his tears, — yea, was ready to do anything to save them from the fearful consequences of their sins. But he knew their punishment was just, for their sins were very aggravated. They were faithless and corrupt. It seems strange that a people so highly favored of God could so forget him, trample his laws under their feet, and abuse his goodness and forbearance. But for the great love he had for them as his chosen people, he would have utterly cast them off as unworthy of such favors. What, then, must God think of us? Are not we, who live in the noon tide blaze of this gospel era, lifted to heaven in point of privilege? Where are the people so highly favored? The Son of righteousness is pouring his brightest beams on us; do we appreciate his gifts by making a wise use of them? Or does God find us turning to our idols, while we neglect his altars, and bring no acceptable sacrifices to them? It is easy to judge others: do we not condemn ourselves thereby? Will not God be avenged for these things? He cannot do otherwise, since he is holy. Wise shall we be to forsake every false and sinful way, while we seek forgiveness for all the past.

S. M. Did Christ o'er sinners weep,
And shall our cheeks be dry?
Let floods of penitential grief
Burst forth from every eye.

The Son of God in tears
The wondering angels see;
Be thou astonished, O my soul;
He shed those tears for thee.

1 And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me.

12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

ACTS, xi. 1-16.

God is no respecter of persons, and the gospel offers salvation to any one who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Up to that time religion had been as much a matter of race and nation as the color of one's skin, or the country of one's birth. But then it was declared to be the state of one's heart toward God,—a trusting, obedient spirit. This is the essence of true faith, and such God accepts. But it was hard for men full of prejudice to understand this, and only the clearest evidence could satisfy them. The gift of the Spirit to the Gentiles, however, taught them that God was ready to bless and save all of every nation who would believe in Christ. We should follow the leading hand of Providence, though it be in ways which seem to us dark and strange. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts; and he will never allow the one who trusts him wholly to go astray. When we acknowledge him in all our ways, he will direct our steps, and use us to secure his glory. We have a special interest in this subject, for we are of those Gentiles for whom God showed so plainly his grace was intended. We should carry the gospel to any person. God's grace is equal to the saving of any soul. Let us preach to every creature.

S. M.

"Go, preach my gospel," saith the Lord;
"Bid the whole earth my grace receive;
He shall be saved that trusts my word,
And he condemned who'll not believe.

"I'll make your great commission known;
And ye shall prove my gospel true,
By all the works that I have done,
By all the wonders ye shall do

"Teach all the nations my commands;
I'm with you till the world shall end;
All power is trusted in my hands;
I can destroy, and I defend."

He spake, and light shone round his head;
On a bright cloud to heaven he rode:
They to the farthest nations spread
The grace of their ascended God

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people,

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are by the law

purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. HEBREWS, ix. 15-28.

“Without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” This is God’s plain, unequivocal word. It is the voice of truth. In the ceremonies of the Mosaic law nearly everything was purged by blood, and no sins were even typically removed except by blood-shedding. No sin was ever pardoned without atonement. Moses dedicated the first covenant with the blood of beasts; and it was fitting that the new spiritual covenant should be sanctified by the blood of Christ. Its gracious promises can only be made available by faith in Jesus’ blood. Are we trusting in Christ? Have we been cleansed in his blood? Nothing less can take away the guilt of our sin. It was offered for this purpose. One such sacrifice was sufficient. Think how precious and priceless such blood is! The life is in the blood. It was his life which Jesus gave to ransom us from the awful guilt our sins had occasioned. “The blood of Jesus made his testament valid. Wills are of no power unless the testators die. In this light, the soldier’s spear is a blessed aid to faith, since it proved our Lord to be really dead.” Our title is perfectly secure. We are richly blessed in having this way of forgiveness and access to God. Why ask for another? There can be but one way: this is God’s way, and must be right. Enter upon it now: here is safety, peace, blessedness.

78. All thy sins, when Jesus bled,
Met on his devoted head;
All thy hope on Jesus place,
Plead his promise, trust his grace.

At his feet thy burden lay;
Christ shall smile thy fears away;
He thy guilt and sorrow bore;
Weeping saint, lament no more.

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

HEBREWS, xiii. 5-21.

Are you aiming at perfection in every good work? This is the Father's will concerning every man. The Spirit working within can alone secure it: yet we must practise every good work, and cultivate every grace. We must shun covetousness, cherish contentment, freely give for the good of others, as thank-offerings to God; we must sacrifice for the cause of Christ, and live with our heart and hope in the city of God. Is there anything else to live for? "Here is nothing permanent, nothing sure, nothing satisfying; but there is a home, a treasure, a kingdom, complete, perfect, eternal." This will make us strong against temptation, and calm in trials. God has become to us, through Christ, the God of peace; and that peace, ruling in our hearts, will make us "perfect in every good work to do his will." What has not the unchanging Jesus promised us when he says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." He had you in his mind, and spoke this for you. There is no blessing not included; no living water of which you may not drink; no heavenly food that you may not eat of: God here gives everything. His power, grace, mercy, love, are all engaged to the fullest extent on our side. You can think of nothing in time or eternity which is not secured in this gracious promise.

L. M. My gracious Lord, I own thy right
To every service I can pay,
And call it my supreme delight
To hear thy dictates and obey.

What is my being but for thee, —
Its sure support, its noblest end?
'Tis my delight thy face to see,
And serve the cause of such a Friend.

16 And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee?

18 Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us.

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

21 So went the present over before him; and himself lodged that night in the company.

22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

GENESIS, xxxii. 16-30.

We need to unite humble praying with diligent working. Jacob wisely arranged his presents, and put choice words into his servants' mouths. "Gifts make room for a man, and pacify anger and strong wrath." We need not despair of appeasing the worst of men until a fair trial has been made. Peace and love are worth having at a large cost. Jacob was not long alone, for an angel came near. Jacob grappled with him, and held him until he blessed him. The struggle was long; but although crippled, and deeply humiliated by confessing sins committed twenty years ago, yet Jacob prevailed. His power with God was fully confessed. Blessings are not often gained without a struggle. Men of mighty faith must expect great conflicts. Jacob prevailed, but at the price of a halting limb. God keeps pride out of our hearts by showing us our dependence. What a picture! A weak man grasping the angel of God, and crying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." He must have the blessing. He prevails, and has a new name given him, to remind him of this hour. He names the place Peniel, "I have seen God, and my life is preserved." O the power of prevailing prayer! "Because thou hast power with God, thou hast with men."

88. Come, O thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee:
With thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

I need not tell thee who I am:
My sin and misery declare;
Thyself hast called me by my name;
Look on thy hands, and read it there:
But who, I ask thee, who art thou?
Tell me thy name, and tell me now.

1 And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.

2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren everywhere, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

3 And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul.

4 And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5 So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Ilhemat, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark

of God the Lord, that dwelleth between the cherubim, whose name is called on it.

7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzzak and Ahio drove the cart.

8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

9 And when they came unto the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

10 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

11 And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day.

12 And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me? 1 CHRONICLES, xiii. 1-12.

David had just been enthroned, and his first care was for the ark of God. During the later years of Saul's reign, it had been sadly neglected; but now God puts it into the heart of king and people to remove it to a fitting place. Religion should be the subject of our chief thoughts; and especially should this be the case when God has honored and promoted us. Are we setting out in the world, or entering on any new and difficult undertaking, we should seek God's presence. The ark was the symbol of that; and David realized that more than ever he needed the blessing of God on himself and people. We shall be quite sure of God's favor if we set out in his fear, and seek his guiding presence. Good men are very likely to make mistakes in their best endeavors, and David erred greatly in not having the ark carried by the priests. This mistake brought a sad end to this good undertaking. Uzzah's presumption and death would not have occurred but for this, and David would not have been deprived of the ark's presence for months. The sin of Uzzah should warn us to beware how we deal with holy things. God is a jealous God in that he will allow no one to interfere with his prerogatives.

C. M. Will God in very deed descend,
And dwell with men below?
An ear to mortal worship lend?
To us his glory show?

While heaven's exalted spheres resound
With hymns which angels sing,
Will God in mercy so abound,
To accept the praise we bring?

Allowed within thy courts to meet,
Thy presence we implore;
Smile on us from thy mercy-seat,
And we desire no more.

Here make thyself a glorious name,
And form us for thy praise;
Thy promised presence, Lord, we claim,
And supplicate thy grace.

1 My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

3 Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

4 And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

8 All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

9 Kings' daughters were among thy honorable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy lord; and worship thou him.

12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favor.

13 The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.

14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

PSALMS, xlv. 1-16.

David describes here the personal grace, warlike prowess, and rich adornments of a royal bridegroom. Then he depicts the beauty, dress, and attendants of the bride whom he exhorts to leave her home and her own people for her husband. His heart glows at the sight of the beauty, majesty, and glory of this king. The church, led from a strange land, is brought to him to be enriched and beautified as his bride. Under this delicate symbol is pictured the love of Christ for his church. Christ is a picture of beauty, and a breastplate of glory. Each feature adorns the others, and makes him altogether lovely. His power, grace, justice, tenderness, truth, and immutability make the God-man. His infancy, eternity, sufferings, triumphs, death, and immortality, are all woven in one gorgeous tapestry. His choice of a bride seems strange enough. Naturally she was not lovely or attractive. But his grace completely transforms her, so that, dwelling in his house, hearing his wisdom, receiving of his spirit, she becomes fitted for his bride. The grand marriage will take place as soon as she is ready. The angels have a set piece to sing at the marriage. The words are, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his wife hath made herself ready." The tune we shall know when we hear it. Let us have our wedding-garments ready.

8s, 7s, & 4s.

Gird thy sword on, mighty Saviour;
Make the word of truth thy car;
Prosper in thy course, triumphant;
All success attend thy war:
Gracious Victor,
Bring thy trophies from afar.

Blest are they that touch thy sceptre;
Blest are all that own thy reign;
Freed from sin, that worst of tyrants,
Rescued from its galling chain:
Saints and angels,
All who know thee bless thy reign.

1 Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

4 Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead:

6 Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.

7 As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.

8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

9 My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

10 Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?

11 I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.

12 Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.

13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.

SOLOMON'S SONG, vi. 1-13.

This portion of scripture seems principally to be a social, familiar conversation between Christ and his bride — the church. Strangers ask an introduction to her beloved. She tells them that he is gathering lilies in his garden. These lilies will never fade, but be transplanted soon to heavenly soil, to bloom forever. Christ married an only child. "The only one of her mother." She will be complete, perfect. The brides of earthly kings and monarchs saw her, and praised her. Her character and position were far superior to theirs. She looks forth as the morning, — looks upon all the earth, like the sun, as the great field of her labor. Like the sun, the church is to warn and lighten the whole earth. She is like the moon at first, with spots and more or less faults, ever changing in her earthly state. The church, in her march over the face of the earth, is as terrible to wicked men and devils as an army with banners. But soon she will resemble the sun in its noonday brightness, with the moon under her feet; so bright that no mortal eye can endure the sight. This view of Christ and his bride stirred the heart of Solomon, and made his soul like the chariots of Amminadib. Let us speak kindly and tenderly of Christ's bride, although we may see faults in her. "The King's daughter is all glorious within."

11s.

Daughter of Zion, awake from thy sadness;

Awake, for thy foes shall oppress thee no

more;

Bright o'er thy hills dawns the day-star of gladness;

Arise, for the night of thy sorrow is o'er.

Daughter of Zion, the power that hath saved thee

Extolled with the harp and the timbrel should be;

Shout, for the foe is destroyed that enslaved thee;

The oppressor is vanquished, and Zion is free.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

20 And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

23 Of this man's seed hath God, according

to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

30 But God raised him from the dead.

ACTS, xiii. 16-30.

Nothing is more encouraging and inspiring than a review of our past history, whether national or individual. We see the evidences of God's goodness on every hand. His grace and mercy are manifested in a thousand ways. It would be very helpful to us if we were in the habit of often making such views. The Bible gives us many examples. Recalling past blessings will strengthen our faith in God, as we see how he causes all things to work together for the accomplishment of his purposes, and that certainly includes our well-being. A review of Israel's history reveals God's constant care, his unchanging love, his ceaseless compassion. He was all the time preparing the way for the promised Messiah. When he came, and was rejected by his people, slain, laid in the sepulchre, even their wicked acts fulfilled the prophecies in regard to him, and more fully established his Messiahship. The proofs of his claim reached the climax in his resurrection. That proved him to be the Son of God, with power. What glad tidings is this! Death had no power over our Saviour.

C. M. When all the powers of hell combined
To fill his cup of woe,
Their wondering eyes beheld his tears
In blood and anguish flow.

As on the torturing cross he hung,
And darkness veiled the sky,
Amazed, they saw that awful sight,
The Lord of glory die.

They saw him break the bars of death,
Which none e'er broke before,
And rise in conquering majesty,
To stoop to death no more.

They brought his chariot from the skies,
To bear him to his throne,
Clapped their triumphant wings, and cr'ed,
"The glorious work is done!"

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

ACTS, xiii. 1-12.

We have here some account of the first great mission tour to the Gentiles. A few had been called, but no extended effort had been put forth to reach them. Paul had been distinctly told that his mission would be to the Gentiles, and he was doubtless in expectation of such instruction, and to be set apart to the work. The church should enter upon no new departure without much prayer, and earnestly seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. What is true of the church is true of individuals. We need the wisdom and grace which God alone can give, to enable us to do anything well. If we fast as well as pray, we shall only follow the example of Christ's servants in all ages. He himself set the example. Satan always has his servants ready to oppose every good work, and it was no strange thing that Paul and Barnabas met one of them at Paphos. They found them everywhere, and suffered much at their hands. Paul describes him as a child of the devil, full of subtlety and mischief, an enemy of righteousness, and a perverter of right ways. There is no end to the wickedness one will do, who lends himself to the spirit of evil. He will oppose all good. Let us give no place to the suggestions of Satan. He takes every possible advantage, and leads from one degree of wickedness to another. Ruin and eternal death await every follower of Satan.

C. M. There is a way that seemeth right,
The steps go on with ease;
And conscience slumbers while the soul
Forsakes the path of peace.

There is a way that leads to death,
God hath the warning given;
And multitudes pursue that way,
Still dreaming on of heaven.

16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;

18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send ye far hence unto the Gentiles.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and

said, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free-born.

ACTS, xxii. 16-28.

The multitude listened attentively, until Paul spoke of salvation being offered to the Gentiles. Their bigotry no longer gave heed to facts: arguments could not influence prejudice. Their fury knew no bounds. But Paul was tranquil and perfectly self-possessed. The grace of God enabled him to remain calm. The Roman officer supposed that this new outburst of rage against him must be caused by some flagrant crime on his part, and determined to extort a confession by scourging. Paul had inherited the birth-right of Roman citizenship. He often used this to protect himself from violence. It is always proper for Christians to seek the protection of the law; but of course this is not their main reliance. Personal trust in Christ is their chief hope. God knows how to baffle their enemies, turn aside destructive weapons, and deliver his servants. Without his permission no weapon can harm them, no evil befall them. We need to learn this lesson of trust more thoroughly. But few Christians know how to use their high privilege as they might, or get that rest and peace which strong faith in God will give them. The days of bloodshed for Christ's sake are nearly past. But there is none the less need of great faith in God. The trials of Christians and their temptations may be as difficult to bear as bodily torture.

P. M. Dare to do right! dare to be true!
You have a work that no other can do;
Do it so bravely, so kindly, so well,
Angels will hasten the story to tell.

Dare to do right! dare to be true!
Other men's failures can never save you;
Stand by your conscience, your honor, your
faith,
Stand like a hero, and battle till death.

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

ACTS, viii. 25-39.

It is not sufficient for us that we *read* the Scriptures. We must seek to *understand* them. They will be of comparatively little value to us until we know their meaning. Matthew Henry says, "Shake the limbs of the tree when you read, that a ripe apple may drop." The Holy Spirit can guide us into all truth. When Daniel desired to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he gave himself to prayer, asking God to open the vision. Diligent, careful study, and much exercise in prayer, will enable us to understand the hardest doctrines and the most difficult subjects of the Bible. "Thoughts and reasonings are like the steel wedges, which give a hold upon truth; but prayer is the lever which forces open the iron chest of sacred mystery that we may get the treasure therein." Believing in Christ with all the heart entitles us to all the ordinances and privileges of the gospel. We need not fear to go forward in any ordinance after we have believed, for Jesus gives full liberty to all such. When the Holy Ghost gives the spirit of adoption, we may freely enjoy all the privileges of the Christian. We may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Are you longing to walk at liberty in the Lord's commands? Jesus says, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

C. M. In all my Lord's appointed ways
My journey I'll pursue;
"Hinder me not," ye much-loved saints,
For I must go with you.

Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes;
"Hinder me not," shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.

1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now, they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words

which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

JOHN, xvii. 1-13.

Who can write fitting words of such a prayer? We may only seek to learn some lessons of wisdom. His words of love and comfort to his disciples are uttered, and the heart of Jesus seeks to pour itself out in an intercessory prayer for the objects of his tender solicitude. He longs for home, and lifts his eyes heavenward. "Jesus had but little to ask for himself; but when his words include his disciples, they become an irresistible stream of the most fervent love." He asks for the glory which he had laid aside. He prays the Father to keep those who had received his words and believed on him. They are the mutual possession of the Father and Son. While Christ was with them he had kept them, but now commends them to the Father's keeping. Judas, a devil from the beginning, was lost. We should soon turn back, unless "kept by the power of God." After committing ourselves to him, let us say, "I am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him." He desired that they might have full experience of his joy, not such as the world knows. He desires them to have a deep under-current of joy, such as will be in them a well-spring of gladness. Jesus looks well to the graces of his people, and makes their joy his constant care. Do we make enough of the joy of the Lord?

S M Raise your triumphant songs
To an immortal tune;
Let all the earth resound the deeds
Celestial grace has done.

Sing how eternal Love
Its chief Beloved chose,
And bade him raise our ruined race
From their abyss of woes.

His hand no thunder bears;
No terror clothes his brow;
No bolts to drive our guilty souls
To fiercer flames below.

"Twas mercy filled the throne,
And wrath stood silent by,
When Christ was sent with pardons down
To rebels doomed to die.

17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

20 And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

21 And the man, wondering at her, held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.

22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ear-ring, of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold:

23 And said, Whose daughter art thou?

tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

24 And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

26 And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord.

27 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.

28 And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things.

29 And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

GENESIS, xxiv. 17-29.

How true it is that God is so ready to hear the true prayer of faith, that his answers go before our words, or even our thoughts! While the servant is praying, a fair and beautiful maiden comes to the well. The words of Isaiah were fulfilled, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." He had asked that the chosen bride might come to meet him at the well, and behold! a maiden came with her pitcher, and went down to the well and filled it. Was she the right one? He hastened to see if other conditions of his prayer were answered, and modestly asked for a drink of water. He then had still further proof that God was surely guiding him. With animated zeal she fulfills all the conditions he had named to the Lord. "The maiden's conduct—so admirable in itself, and so exactly in unison with his previous wishes—struck him with a kind of amazement, accompanied by a momentary hesitation whether all could be true." It was too good to be believed. He opened his treasury, and took out the golden ear-ring and bracelets, and putting the ornaments on the beautiful girl, the servant lifted up his heart in gratitude, while Rebekah hastened to her mother with the news. Knowing by the costly ornaments of the sister that the stranger came from a family of wealth, her brother Laban hastened to invite him to the house, and gave him a most hospitable welcome.

L. M. Come in, thou blessed of the Lord;
O, come in Jesus' precious name:
We welcome thee with one accord,
And trust the Saviour does the same.

And while we pass this vale of tears,
We'll make our joys and sorrows known;
We'll share each other's hopes and fears,
And count a brother's case our own.

33 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

34 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and

his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high-priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

JOHN, xi. 38-50.

Unbelief is the greatest obstacle which man can put in the way of a wonder-working Jesus. It shuts souls out of heaven and great blessings out of Christian hearts. Jesus directs them to take away the stone. God never does what we can do, but requires us to do all we can, and depend on him for the rest. Here he would test, as well as strengthen, their faith. When the stone was removed, the voice of Jesus was heard in the rocky recess, calling the dead to life. That same voice will yet be heard over every field of death, and all will obey the summons back to life. There is life and power in that voice. What a sublime moment in human history, equalled by only one other, the moment of Jesus' resurrection! We see the strange effects of this wondrous miracle on two classes of persons. Many believe; others reject. So the gospel always savors of life or death. Life to the believing, death to the unbelieving. Strange that this act of mercy should have so affected the Sanhedrim. They met, not to acknowledge his claims, but to reject him. The very pith of the gospel is in the words of the high-priest. Unconscious prophet! you spoke truer than you knew! It was expedient that Jesus be lifted up, since he was to draw the world to him thereby.

L. M. This is the word of truth and love,
Sent to the nations from above;
Jehovah here resolves to show
What his almighty grace can do.

This remedy did wisdom find,
To heal diseases of the mind;
This sovereign balm, whose virtues can
Restore the ruined creature, man.

The gospel bids the dead revive;
Sinners obey the voice, and live;
Dry bones are raised and clothed afresh,
And hearts of stone are turned to flesh.

May but this grace my soul renew,
Let sinners gaze and hate me too;
The word that saves me does engage
A sure defence from all their rage.

28 And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.

1 KINGS, xviii. 28-39.

The famine which God sent on the land was causing mutiny among the people. At just this time Elijah appeared, calling the people to decide for Baal or God, and challenging Ahab to an open contest of divinities. Men have never looked upon a more sublime spectacle than this controversy between Elijah and these prophets, Jehovah and Baal, presented. The fearless bearing of the prophet, standing alone before a hostile king, with his many priests; his bold appeal to the people to give up the fashionable idolatry; his fair proposal, offering to give every advantage to his enemies; his cool irony when they were frantic; his calm assurance; the flooding of the altars; his confiding prayer for the vindication of Jehovah's glory; and the turning of the people's hearts,—these things prepared all minds for the divine manifestation, and extorted the decision, "The Lord, he is the God." This passage has its lesson for us. Humble, devout service for God is not much more fashionable now than it was at this time in Israel. A formal saying of prayers, and cold recognition of Christ, are common enough. But this is not what God would have. A *whole-hearted* service is the only thing which will satisfy him. To-day his voice is ringing in our ears, "Why halt ye?" If the Lord be God, serve him; but if Baal, serve him.

S. M. The Lord Jehovah calls;
By every ear inclined;
May such a voice awake each heart,
And captivate the mind.

22

If he in thunder speak,
Earth trembles at his nod;
But milder accents here proclaim
The condescending God.

11 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God.

13 And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

16 This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents.

17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

18 And when they did mete it with an

omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.

19 And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

20 Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

21 And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

22 And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

23 And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe: and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

24 And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therin.

25 And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field.

EXODUS, xvi. 11-25.

Israel murmured, for they had exhausted their store, and found no food in the wilderness. God sent them an abundant supply of sweet, delicious food. "Man did eat angels' food." Their conduct deserved different treatment. The manna there proclaims God's grace. He is merciful, and delights in love. There God puts on a diadem of grace, and crowns the thankless with most tender mercies. But here are only the dawnings of grace; the zenith is seen in the gospel scheme. "When the whole family of man stood before God, lost, ruined, undone, one leprous man of misery and sin, shameless, tearless, prayerless, mercy took up the song, and promised that a Saviour should come." The manna was white and sweet. White is heaven's color. The robes are all white, indicating purity; and Jesus was holiness itself. Pure as the mid-day sunbeam, he is all sweetness to the feasting soul. Jesus, then, is the believer's manna. At such a banquet he regales all day; on such love he reposes all night; through life he walks where such sweetness abounds. Dear reader, do you feed on such heavenly food, or are you starving on the world's husks?

As. Jesus, lead us with thy power
Safe unto the promised rest;
Hide our souls within thy bosom,
Let us slumber on thy breast;
Feed us with the heavenly manna,
Bread that angels eat above;
Let us drink from the holy fountain
Draughts of everlasting love.

Throughout the desert wild conduct us
With a glorious pillar bright,
In the day a cooling comfort,
And a cheering fire by night;
Be our guide in every peril,
Watch us hourly, night and day;
Otherwise we'll err and wander
From thy Spirit far away.

29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome;

41 Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

MARK, xv. 29-45.

Surely it was enough for our Saviour to suffer in body as he did, without being subjected to the more cruel mockery and jeering of malignant foes. So we feel: but from highest heaven he had looked on the scene, and had comprehended what it all meant. He knew how low down he must go to save the lost ones, yet said, "I will go." When the hour came he did not shrink. He could listen to their bitter words, and cry, "Father, forgive them." Yes, he could have saved himself, but then *we* should not have been saved. Even the Father must turn his eyes away from his Son in that hour, for he was in the sinner's place, and God cannot look on the sinner with favor. What wondrous results followed the death of Jesus! That great, high veil of the temple, that had so long shut men away from God's presence, was torn from top to bottom, proclaiming that by the death of Jesus a new way was opened to God. Omnipotence opened the soldier's heart, which had been steeled and barred to all else, to say, "Truly this man was the Son of God." In Joseph's sepulchre Christ found a resting-place for a brief space. How thankful we should be that Jesus has shown us that the grave has no power to keep, though it kindly receives us! We need not dread the grave. Jesus has taken away its victory.

8s, 7s, & 4s.

Hark! the voice of love and mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary:
See! it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth, and veils the sky:
"It is finished!"
Hear the dying Saviour cry.

"It is finished!" O, what pleasure
Do these charming words afford!
Heavenly blessings, without measure,
Flow to us through Christ the Lord:
"It is finished!"
Saints the dying words record.

5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

9 Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

13 Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding:

14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor.

17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

19 The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

20 By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

PROVERBS, iii. 5-20.

“Godliness with contentment is great gain.” What a great mistake many are making in their judgment of religion! They regard it as bidding farewell to happiness or enjoyment. What a picture Solomon has given us of the true happiness of a godly life! He beautifully displays the various graces essential to godliness, and the blessings which flow from them. Dear reader, have you formed such a wrong opinion of a Christian life? Weigh well the words of the wise man, who had better opportunities of forming a correct judgment than any other person. Wisdom is but another name for godliness. Solomon teaches here that there is a peace and pleasure in godliness which makes even the present enjoyment far higher than any gratification the world can give. Many others who know, testify to the same. You judge from one side; they from both. Get the testimony of some Christian in whom you have confidence, and you will hear, “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” Gold cannot purchase anything like it; rubies are not so precious: the happiness she gives is constant and durable. Can there be greater gain? Do you think of crosses, persecutions, afflictions, reproaches, distresses? Yet, all her paths are peace. God’s favor makes our peace. With that, you will count it all joy to bear everything. Be persuaded to try and see. “O, make but trial of his love!”

L. M.

O, happy day, that fixed my choice

On thee, my Saviour, and my God;

Well may this glowing heart rejoice,

And tell its raptures all abroad.

CHORUS. Happy day, happy day, &c.

“Tis done—the great transaction’s done:

I am my Lord’s, and he is mine;

He drew me, and I followed on,

Rejoiced to own the call divine.

CHO. Happy day, happy day, &c.

16 And David the king came and sat before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

17 And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.

18 What can David speak more to thee for the honor of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant.

19 O Lord, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things.

20 O Lord, there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

21 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?

22 For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, Lord, becamest their God.

23 Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.

24 Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and let the house of David thy servant be established before thee.

25 For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him a house: therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee.

26 And now, Lord, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

27 Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed for ever.

1 CHRONICLES, xvii. 16-27.

What a model prayer is this! Here is humility, faith, and fervency. David was conscious of being unworthy of such great honor, yet he receives the promises, embraces them, is persuaded of them, and asks for their fulfillment. Here is a rich lesson. God has promised great things, covering all our needs. Shall we sit down, fold our hands, and wonder why the blessings do not come? Nay, rather let us on our knees beg of God to do as he has said, and then work with all our might to secure the fulfillment. Our desires and prayers can never equal God's promises and purposes. What could David ask now? God loves to give according to his ability. He can afford to do great things; he wants to do them. Let us not dishonor him with feeble askings and a weak faith. David fore-saw the Lord, and felt sure it must be the Messiah, for whom the throne was to be forever. So great is the promise, he can only cry, "Do as thou hast said." It covers all my desire. Only establish his throne forever. Dimly, no doubt, his faith-lit eye grasped the meaning of the promise; yet he saw it, and rejoiced in it. How blessed are we when we can lay our hand on God's promise, and say, "Do as thou hast said." This blessing is ours. These promises cover all our needs; and we may point to them, saying, "Lord, thou hast promised."

C. M. How long the race of David held
The promised Jewish throne!
But there's a nobler promise sealed
To David's greater Son

His seed forever shall possess
A throne above the skies;
The meanest subject of his grace
Shall to that glory rise.

1 He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

3 Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.

4 The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

5 A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet.

6 In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.

7 The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.

8 Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath.

9 If a wise man contendeth with a foolish

man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.

10 The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.

11 A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

12 If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.

13 The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the Lord lighteneth both their eyes.

14 The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.

17 Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

PROVERBS, xxix. 1-18.

Many are the ways in which wisdom proves of great advantage to its possessor. It is a source of life, health, and peace. It brings unlimited happiness in its train, tempering prosperity, encouraging the heart in adversity, and giving the best rules for the conduct of life. Wisdom, in a ruler, makes his subjects rejoice; in a parent, enables him properly to train his children so that they become fountains of gladness to his heart; in a child, causes him so to live as to rejoice in his parents; in a citizen, makes him respected and loved. The lack of wisdom in any position makes one a source of sorrow, anxiety, and trouble. The people mourn when the ruler has it not. The parent without it neglects his children to their ruin and his grief, while the foolish child will be a source of perpetual anxiety. This wisdom God offers to give freely to all who ask. He will give us the germ, put us in the most favorable circumstances for its development, and help us in its culture. The foundation of this wisdom is laid in a service of loving obedience to God, and in such a service it will mature into a perfect growth. We cannot afford to be without it, for it will be a well-spring of joy and gladness. "Therefore, get wisdom."

S. M. Now is the day of grace;
Now to the Saviour come;
The Lord is calling, "Seek my face,
And I will guide you home."

Our sins to heaven ascend,
And there for vengeance cry;
O God, behold the sinner's Friend,
Who intercedes on high.

A Father bids you speed;
O, wherefore then delay?
He calls in love; he sees your need;
He bids you come to-day.

To-day the prize is won;
The promise is to save;
Then, O, be wise; to-morrow's sun
May shine upon your grave.

36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb.

43 And he took it, and did eat before them.

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

LUKE, xxiv. 36-53.

The truth that Jesus was indeed risen was so precious that the overjoyed disciples could not tarry at Emmaus. They hastened back to Jerusalem to tell their brethren. Coming into the room, they "were received with a burst of joyful news before they could tell their own tale." We cannot wonder at their eager anxiety to speak of Jesus' resurrection. Is not the truth as precious now as then, and should not we talk about the revelations of his love, which he makes to us, with burning hearts and glowing words? While they were talking, Jesus himself came. How like him, and how often has he repeated such visits to the place where his people were joyfully relating their experiences of his grace! He is not always recognized until he has given new proofs of his love for us. There is a dread in human nature of the spirit-world, but Jesus quickly dissipated their fears. He opened their understandings. He alone could do it, and happy are those whose minds have been cleared by the Spirit of Jesus. All is dark until he makes light. When he has done that, they may go forth to their work, preaching repentance in his name. They must tarry for the enduring power which he provides. When the tongue is set on fire by the Spirit, it should be used in telling about Jesus.

7s "Wide, ye heavenly gates, unfold,
Closed no more by death and sin;
Lo, the conquering Lord behold;
Let the King of glory in."

"Who shall up to that abode
Follow in the Saviour's train?"
"They who in his cleansing blood
Wash away each guilty stain."

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even

so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

LUKE, xxiv. 17-32.

It is a good thing to talk about Jesus, whether we walk, or work, or sit together. He will be sure to come to those who delight to converse about him. It may seem strange that these brethren did not at once recognize that familiar voice. But it is a common experience, for we all read his word without knowing him at times. This is because of unbelief. These disciples were not expecting to see Jesus, hence did not know him. Faith alone can enable us to see him, whether in prayer or studying his word. "It is a blessed thing to *want* to see him; but O! it is better far to look upon him. To those who seek him, he is kind; but to those who find him, beyond expression is he dear!" The disciples were very highly favored in having such an expounder of the Scriptures. He might have revealed fresh truths, told them all about heaven, where he was so soon going, its inhabitants and their employments; but he knew it was more needful for them to have the old truths unfolded. We must turn to Moses and the prophets, if we would take the best road to the highest wisdom. If we would be spiritually rich, we must dig in the mine where God's diamonds are hid away. Jesus turned to the Scriptures when he would gather pearls for his brethren. These were precious moments to them, and their hearts burned with joy.

7s. Angels, roll the rock away;
Death, yield up thy mighty prey:
See! he rises from the tomb,
Rises with immortal bloom.

"Tis the Saviour; seraphs, raise
Your triumphant shouts of praise;
Let the earth's remotest bound
Hear the joy-inspiring sound.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, be-

hold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he said unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

LUKE, xix. 12-27.

Our Saviour was about to depart from earth to his Father, to be fully invested with that royal authority which had been promised him. In his absence, his disciples have certain responsibilities put on them, according to their several gifts and opportunities. At his coming, each one will be judged by the measure of his fidelity. "It is not the *largeness* of the return, but the *fidelity* of the service, that receives the reward. But while the reward shall be thus rich, beautiful, and free, indifference, neglect, perversion, or abuse of privilege, shall be punished by 'destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.'" Whether God has given you one talent or ten, he expects you to be faithful in its use, and he will reward your fidelity; but if you neglect to improve opportunities of using your gifts, he will take them away, and fearfully punish the neglect. It will not do to go up to the Judgment with the complaint, I had but one talent, and so did nothing. Use the gift God has given you as best you can, and he will count you worthy of a higher trust: but neglect it, and he will take it away, and condemn you as an unprofitable servant.

C. M. Watch! 'tis your Lord's command;
And while we speak, he's near:

Mark every signal of his hand,
And ready all appear.

23

O, happy servant he,
In such a posture found!
He shall his Lord with rapture see,
And be with honor crowned.

1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eye; unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

LUKE, xviii. 1-14.

We pray always by living a life wholly consecrated to God. When we do this we shall be seeking his glory in all things, and such a life will be an unceasing prayer; but we ought to pray in words much more than we do. "It is the church's privilege to pray acceptably. The door of grace is always open for her petitions, and they never return empty-handed." This first parable teaches us that one element of successful prayer is great *importunity*. Surely, if the power of earnest entreaty upon a hard-hearted man will cause him to yield, God, who is the loving, pitying Father of his people, will most surely regard their earnest, importunate cries. It is to be feared that many prayers are not answered because we are not persistent in our seeking. God sees we are half-hearted about it, and would not appreciate the blessing if given. But prayer must be humble, self-renouncing, sin-confessing, and not self-complacent. Having no consciousness of sin, the Pharisee knew nothing of the joy of forgiveness; the publican knew both. One trusted in his merit, and received nothing; the other humbly appealed to God's free mercy, and obtained a great blessing. Here are two very important lessons for all who pray: while we are to continue instant in prayer, we must be importunate and humble; distrusting self, let us trust God. He delights to hear prayer.

C. H. M. Come, let us pray: 'tis sweet to feel
That God himself is near;
That, while we at his footstool kneel,
His mercy deigns to hear:
Though sorrows cloud life's dreary way,
This is our solace—let us pray.

Come, let us pray: the burning brow,
The heart oppressed with care,
And all the woes that throng us now,
Will be relieved by prayer:
Jesus will smile our griefs away;
O, glorious thought! come, let us pray.

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.

6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.

7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

10 The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

11 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.

12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearward.

13 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

15 So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

ISAIAH, lii. 5-15.

These words are a trumpet-call to Zion to arouse from her despondency and doubts, and put on strength. Casting away their fears, they are to rejoice in the Lord, for the joy of the Lord is their strength. Awaking from their distrust, they must look up, look about, study God's providences, and see how they are working for them. Look into the promises, so rich and full, and trust God for their fulfillment. Christians should never give way to fears and doubts. There is no reason for it. God's word should inspire them with the confidence that all things work together for their good, that behind every dark providence is a smiling face. The bands of unbelief should be cast off, for whom the Son makes free are free indeed. We are called unto liberty, and should exult in it, and not go about as base-born slaves. No tidings can be compared to the good news which Christ's servants bring,—salvation for the lost. When rightly considered, this will put us into a very transport of joy. The watchmen will rejoice to come with such news; the people will rejoice to hear it. Waste places are made glad, and all hearts sing God's praise. If we are bound by unbelief, let us break the bands asunder, look to the promises, trust God, and our souls will be filled with singing and joy.

S. M. How beauteous are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill;
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal!

How charming is their voice!
How sweet their tidings are!—
"Zion, behold thy Saviour King;,"
He reigns and triumphs here."

How happy are our ears,
That hear this joyful sound!
Which kings and prophets waited for,
And sought, but never found.

How blessed are our eyes,
That see this heavenly light!
Prophets and kings desired it long,
But died without the sight.

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

12 Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have a

husband also to-night, and should also bear sons;

13 Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

RUTH, i. 6-18.

This little book of Ruth is a very garden of roses, fragrant and full of mystic calyxes. How suggestive and instructive the story! Human love took Orpah back to her people, while love, purified, ennobled, and sanctified, led Ruth to cleave to Naomi. How marked the result! The one is lost in the great sea of humanity, the other became the grandmother of David, and the ancestress of Jesus. "Entreat me not to leave thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Here is more than affection for Naomi; there is drawing of the heart to God. The silken cord of love by which Jesus draws hearts from self and the world to himself, was wound round her heart, and she felt its power. "It is one thing to love the ways of the Lord when all is fair, but quite another to cleave to them under all discouragements and difficulties." Profession is cheap and easy; but holy living, which makes the profession mean something, is not. It is very easy to wear a cross on the person, but to nail the affections and lusts to a cross is quite another matter. What an example is here for the Christian! He must take the Lord for his God. This God is *my* God forever and ever. His people are my people. I must share their sorrows and burdens, as well as joys and pleasures; go where God would have me go; suffer what he would have me suffer; toil when he would have me toil; die when he would have me die.

L. M. Thou God of hope, to thee we bow;
Thou art our refuge in distress;
The husband of the widow thou,
The father of the fatherless.

The poor are thy peculiar care;
To them thy promises are sure;
Thy gifts the poor in spirit share;
O, may we always thus be poor.

7 O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

8 O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?

9 Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.

10 Thus saith the Lord unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet; therefore the Lord doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins.

11 Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for this people for their good.

12 When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

13 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place.

14 Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.

15 Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.

16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.

JEREMIAH, xiv. 7-16.

Many are the promises God has given regarding the prayer of his people, and numberless are the instances of prayer graciously answered. But our salvation reveals another fact to us. We may go on in sin until the cup of iniquity is full and God says, "It is enough: Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." There is a point beyond which even God's mercy cannot go. That point had been reached by Israel, and the prayers of Jeremiah could not prevail to turn away the sword of vengeance. When the prophet tried to find excuses for them, he was assured that not even the intercession of Moses or Samuel would avail. There is a time when God leaves the sinner to blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Then he will not regard his prayer: it is too late. Then the hope of Israel, their Saviour, becomes a stranger, like one simply journeying through the land. He tarries not. We have many other passages that tell us the same truth. We need to lay these things to heart. Our God is merciful, slow to anger, long-suffering, but he will not always forbear. If we go on provoking him by our sins, there shall come a time when God will say, "Though they cry, I will not hear." Forsaking all our sins, let us entreat his forgiveness now, that we may never know the bitterness of being forsaken of God.

L. M. Though I have most unfaithful been,
Of all who e'er thy grace received, —
Ten thousand times thy goodness seen,
Ten thousand times thy goodness grieved, —

Yet, O, the chief of sinners spare,
In honor of my great High Priest;
Nor, in thy righteous anger, swear
I shall not see thy people's rest.

10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

18 But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard:

19 Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou hearest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.

20 Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

2 KINGS, xxii. 10-20.

During the reign of Manasseh, the book of the law was neglected, and only a portion was in circulation. The one prepared by Moses' own hand had been hid away. This the high-priest had found, and read, and sent to the king. He was greatly affected when he heard the curses of sin, and was sure that God's wrath was kindled against them. He humbled himself, sought to know God's will, and yielded to the requirements of the law. He was spared witnessing the punishment on Jerusalem; but as the people were not in sympathy with his pious efforts, the threatened penalty was not removed. As sure as God is holy and just, sin shall not go unpunished; but those who humble themselves before him shall be spared the sight and punishment. Sin is a fearful thing, and God will be a consuming fire to every sinner out of Christ. The voice of wisdom says, "Repent, cease from evil, learn to do well." God is ever ready to forgive the true penitent, but will certainly destroy all evil-doers. Strange that any one should dare to live an hour exposed to God's wrath! If your sin is not yet covered by the blood of Christ, haste to the fountain of cleansing. Delay is most dangerous; you know not the hour when God shall say, Cut him down. Let nothing that God has revealed be hid away.

C. M. My guilt appeared but small before,
Till I with terror saw
How perfect, holy, just, and pure,
Is thine eternal law.

Then felt my soul the heavy load;
My sins revived again;
I had provoked a dreadful God,
And all my hopes were slain.

1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go,

and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

MATTHEW, viii. 1-15.

Leprosy was regarded as incurable, and was a fitting type of sin, which has diseased all souls. Hence this leper's healing was a sign of hope to the perishing. Such an appeal could not fail of touching the heart of the compassionate Saviour. The ready "I will" quickly responds to the trusting "If thou wilt." "Tell no man, but show thyself to the priest," was a true silence, and a proper publicity. The centurion was a model of believing confidence. He earnestly entreats, with unfeigned humility and faith. His was a model household, where love secured unhesitating obedience. Jesus was ready to go, for he had no bigotry, was as willing to save a Gentile as a Jew, when he found saving faith. Heaven will be the gathering-place for God's children from all quarters. While those who have enjoyed great light, but rejected it, will be shut into outer darkness, multitudes, who followed the little light they had, will enter the city of light. Jesus brings great joy, and scatters many blessings in the hour of sickness. There is health for the sick, sympathy and comfort for all. Capernaum had an evening of glorious power and grace. Many such nights has Jesus given the world. Who can fathom the prophetic words, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Have we trusted in Jesus, and felt his healing power? He is the mighty healer still, ready to say "I will," and suit the action to the word.

L. M. There is a great Physician near;
Look up, O fainting soul, and live;
See, in his heavenly smiles appear
Such help as nature cannot give.

See, in the Saviour's dying blood,
Life, health, and bliss abundant flow:
'Tis only that dear, sacred flood
Can ease thy pain, and heal thy woe.

18 Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

19 And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord.

20 And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

21 And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.

22 Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the plague may be stayed from the people.

23 And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt-offerings, and the threshing-instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.

24 And king David said to Ornan, Nay;

but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.

25 So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shickels of gold by weight.

26 And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.

27 And the Lord commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

28 At that time when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

29 For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon.

30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord.

1 CHRONICLES, xxi. 18-30.

“Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away.” When David repented of his sin, God ordered the destroying angel to stay his hand and sheathe his sword. God’s judgments are intended to convince us of our wickedness and bring us to repentance. He is always merciful to true penitents. He will keep his anger no longer, if he sees us turning from our sin. David is commanded to build an altar at once, when the angel had stopped his destroying work. He paid the full price for the place. He knew that God would not accept of an offering that cost nothing. He must have our best,—a spotless lamb, a bullock without blemish, the best of the flock. He must have our best service, our noblest thoughts, the choicest work of our hands. The descending fire testified to God’s acceptance of his offering. The fire consumed the sacrifice, not the sinner. “So Christ was made sin, a curse for us, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him, that through him God might be to us, not a consuming fire, but a reconciled Father.” Every altar and sacrifice should tell us of Christ. They are types of him, and without him are utterly worthless. Jesus is the altar of the church, and the altar sanctifies the gift. Is Christ the precious altar of your faith, joy, hope, love, zeal? Here bring your choicest gifts; God will accept them for his dear sake.

L. M. A broken heart, my God, my King,
Is all the sacrifice I bring;
The God of grace will ne’er despise
A broken heart for sacrifice.

My soul is humbled in the dust,
And owns thy dreadful sentence just;
Look down, O Lord, with pitying eye,
And save the soul condemned to die.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

48 And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

49 And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee; take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

52 And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth.

53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment,

and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master.

55 And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go.

56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

59 And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister; be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

GENESIS, xxiv. 47-60.

Abraham's servant had become so well satisfied that God had led him in the right way, and pointed out the chosen bride for Isaac, that he put the bridal ornaments upon Rebekah as soon as he knew whose daughter she was, and had bowed his head, and worshipped and blessed God for so prospering his mission. He now asks for an immediate decision. If they declined, he would look elsewhere. So God now makes rich offers to us to share the affections and glory of Jesus forever, and places it on our decision, yes or no. How strange that we hesitate for one moment! Rebekah said, "I will go." She went, and became "the mother of thousands of millions." Reader, if not already given to Christ, will you not say "*I will go*"? O, how much may depend on the decision made now! Cast your thoughts into the future. Think of the endless ages rolling on, and of the white-robed throng who then will constitute Christ's bride, sharing his affection and glory forever. O that I could speak for every one who reads this page! I would so readily say, "*I will go*." I will leave all for Thee—father, mother, brothers, sisters, home, everything for Jesus.

We're travelling home to heaven above:
Will you go?
To sing the Saviour's dying love:
Will you go?
Millions have reached that blest abode,
Anointed kings and priests to God:
And millions more are on the road:
Will you go?

O, could I hear some sinner say,
"I will go."
O, could I hear him humbly pray,
"Make me go."
And all his old companions tell,
"I will not go with you to hell;
I long with Jesus Christ to dwell:
Let me go."

17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done.

22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is;

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

ACTS, iv. 17-30.

How sublime the answer of the apostles becomes when we remember their circumstances! They stood before the men who had crucified Jesus, and who hated them intensely. Their judges professed to be the guardians of God's holy Law, and yet were ready to shed the blood of its servants. How prudent and yet bold was the conduct of these apostles! Released from court, they hasten to their own company, and report what has been done. What shall they now do? The rulers have risen against them, and to disobey their commands may result in speedy death. They lay the whole matter before God. What better could they have done? What better can we do than carry all our troubles to Jesus, and leave them with him? God's ear is ever open to the cry of his needy ones. He will be present with his aid. When the Holy Spirit incites such a prayer in the believer's heart, he quickly comes to answer it. He opens the Scriptures, enlightens the understanding, gives freedom and boldness of utterance, and makes the word sharper than a two-edged sword, so that it cuts deep, and makes wounds that only grace can heal.

L. M. Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon;
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till him I view.

This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief a burden long has been,
Because I was not saved from sin.

Lo! glad I came, and thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to thee as I am;
Nothing but sin have I to give,
Nothing but love shall I receive.

Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
And say, "Behold the way to God!"

1 Then Job answered the Lord, and said,
2 I know that thou canst do everything,
and that no thought can be withholden from
thuce.

3 Who is he that hideth counsel without
knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I
understood not; things too wonderful for me,
which I knew not.

4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak:
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto
me.

5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of
the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee:

6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in
dust and ashes.

7 And it was so, that after the Lord had
spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said
to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled
against thee, and against thy two friends: for
ye have not spoken of me the thing that is
right, as my servant Job hath.

8 Therefore take unto you now seven bul-
locks and seven rams, and go to my servant
Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offer-
ing; and my servant Job shall pray for you:
for him will I accept: lest I deal with you
after your folly, in that ye have not spoken
of me the thing which is right, like my ser-
vant Job.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the
Suhite and Zophar the Naamathite went,
and did according as the Lord commanded
them: the Lord also accepted Job.

10 And the Lord turned the captivity of
Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the
Lord gave Job twice as much as he had be-
fore.

11 Then came there unto him all his breth-
ren, and all his sisters, and all they that had
been of his acquaintance before, and did eat
bread with him in his house: and they be-
moaned him, and comforted him over all the
evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every
man also gave him a piece of money,
and every one an ear-ring of gold.

12 So the Lord blessed the latter end of
Job more than his beginning: for he had
fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand
camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a
thousand she-asses.

13 He had also seven sons and three
daughters.

14 After this lived Job a hundred and
forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons'
sons, even four generations.

15 So Job died, being old and full of days.
JOB, xlii. 1-13, 16, 17.

Job was a good man, but had faults, as all men have. His friends thought him astray because of his severe trials, yet God said of him, "There is none like him on earth, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." Job's trials, and support under them, showed to the universe that religion could support under any trial, however severe. In the loss of his children and property, Job was sustained. He said, "The Lord has given and taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." In all this Job sinned not. If we have trials, let us remember that the Lord sends them, and they must work for our good. A clearer view of God humbled Job in the dust, and it will any of us. God turned Job's captivity while he prayed for others, and so he will bless us as we seek others' good. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." "When a man's ways please God, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Job's friends returned to him. Let us learn to bear trials and afflictions, since they work for our good. Job died in peace, surrounded with every needed comfort.

C. M. Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
With blessing on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day, for it was now eventide.

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And Annas the high-priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

ACTS, iv. 1-14.

The apostles were filling Jerusalem with their strange doctrines. Christ was with them. Many miracles of healing had been performed by them. In a few days, about five thousand men were numbered among the believers. The healing of the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple was widely known, and created great commotion. The Sanhedrim felt that something must be done; hence the arrest of Peter and John, and their examination. As we read Peter's words, we find it hard to believe that this is the man who, a short time before, ran at the first appearance of danger, and cruelly denied his Lord. Yet it is he. The indwelling spirit has wrought this marvellous change. They had been with Jesus, and his spirit had unloosed their tongues and destroyed their fear. Every Christian should be a true likeness of Christ. The world should be constrained to say, not, he is *something* like Jesus, but he is *like* him. He looks like him, acts like him, talks like him. He should be bold and free in his utterance of the truth. Never blush to own your religion: you may not adorn religion, but religion will adorn you. When Christ is assailed, stand boldly for him. Imitate Jesus in his spirit and works. Think, speak, and act kindly, as he did. Above all else, we should seek to be like Jesus in holiness. Then men will say, he has been with Jesus.

8s & 7s. Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shalt be.

Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known,
Yet how rich is my condition:
God and heaven are still my own.

1 Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) 3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high-priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,

13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

ACTS, xxii. 1-15.

Paul delivered this address from the steps of the governor's castle in Jerusalem. In the temple a mob had set upon him, and probably would have killed him, had not the Roman captain rescued him with a band of soldiers, and summoned him to defend himself. He gave the simple story of his conversion, and it was well calculated to make a deep impression on their minds. That memorable scene near Damascus, where he became acquainted with Jesus, was to the apostle, the inspiration of a new life. It is always indicative of a great change, when, instead of saying, *I will* do this or that, one inquires, Lord, what shall I do? When a man's will is subdued, so that he yields to another, a change must have been wrought in the centre of his being. It is the human will that resists God, and holds out against him. The life question is, *whose will shall be obeyed?* and when one says, I will yield to God, it is settled. Dear reader, how is it? Has your will been subdued, so that you are sweetly acquiescing in God's will? If you would have peace, abiding and permanent, let God have his way in all things. And how blessed it is to take his hand and be led through the tangled mazes of this life to the city of the Living God!

C. P. M.

O thou that hear'st the prayer of faith,
Wilt thou not save a soul from death
That casts itself on thee?
I have no refuge of my own,
But fly to what my Lord hath done
And suffered once for me.

Slain in the guilty sinner's stead,
His spotless righteousness I plead,
And his availing blood:
That righteousness my robe shall be;
That merit shall atone for me,
And bring me near to God.

47 But Solomon built him a house.

48 Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

49 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

51 Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to the charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

ACTS, vii. 47-60

We should be exceedingly careful lest we think more of a beautiful house of worship than of God, to whom it is dedicated. It is a great condescension in God to accept any house we may build for his service. The universe is his temple. The closing words of Stephen's defence are characterized by cogent reasoning and fervid eloquence. Resisting this clear and positive evidence was resisting the Holy Spirit. But his hearers were hardened by prejudice, and blinded by passion; and when reproofs for sin do not lead to repentance, they stir up hatred toward the reprobate. These men gnashed on Stephen with their teeth. He was ready, however, to lay down his life for Jesus. His faith was strong; his eyes were clear. He saw not so much the rage of his murderers, as the smile of his Saviour. He felt no malice in his heart; but in the same breath with which he had committed his spirit to Jesus, he uttered a prayer for their forgiveness. Surely this first Christian martyr witnessed a good confession. Believer, you have seen the same blessed Saviour, and though you may not be called to die as a martyr, Jesus does expect of you the same confession,—that you will never deny him. It costs something to brave the world's opposition, resist its wicked spirit, and be a living witness for Christ.

P. M. Never be afraid to speak for Jesus,
 Think how much a word can do;
Never be afraid to own your Saviour,
 He who loves and cares for you.

CHORUS. Never be afraid, never be afraid,
 Never, never, never;
 Jesus is your loving Saviour.
Therefore never be afraid

Never be afraid to work for Jesus,
 In his vineyard, day by day;
Labor with a kind and willing spirit,
 He will all your toil repay. **CHO.**

Never be afraid to bear for Jesus
 Keen reproaches when they fall;
Patiently endure your every trial;
 Jesus meekly bore them all. **CHO.**

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not.

26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?

27 But he that did his neighbor wrong, thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?

29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons.

30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

31 When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,

32 Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.

ACTS, vii. 22-38.

Stephen was charged with speaking against Moses. But how false the charge appears in the light of this defence! It would seem difficult to have spoken more in his honor. But he was only a type of that prophet like unto him, whose coming he predicted. That prophet had come, and Stephen was giving heed to his words. Because of this obedience he was on trial before the judges of the nation. Christ is the prophet whom we are to hear. His word is our law. Obedience to his command is our duty. God will richly bless every one who honors Jesus. All who come unto him will receive power to become the sons of God. As a shepherd, he will carefully guard every member of his flock. As a prophet, he will carefully teach in the highest wisdom, and instruct in all things pertaining to salvation and eternal life. As a priest, he will make his sacrifice available to their cleansing from sin, and their free and full forgiveness. As a king or ruler, he will guard all their interests, protect them in their rights, share with them the honors of his kingdom, and bestow on them the riches of his grace. The school of Christ is the place to learn true wisdom. Then let us be diligent students here, that we may be prepared to enter heaven.

C. M. Unshaken as the sacred hill,
And firm as mountains be,
Firm as a rock, the soul shall rest,
That leans, O Lord, on thee.

Not walls nor hills could guard so well
Old Salem's happy ground,
As those eternal arms of love,
That every saint surround

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them

all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea:

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

ACTS, xi. 17-30.

God's ways are not as man's ways; they are infinitely higher and better. The disciples were enjoying good meetings in Jerusalem, and expected to continue feasting on these good things. But the Lord let persecuting wolves in, who scattered the flock. They were thus sown as seed among the Gentiles, that they might bring forth much fruit: so what was intended for the hurt of the church resulted in her good. "The enemies designed to scatter and lose them: Christ designed to scatter and use them." They went everywhere, talking about the Lord Jesus. Great success was given them. Many turned to the Lord, — turned from a vain confidence in the law to faith in Christ; from a loose, careless way of living to a holy, spiritual life. Through this means the church at Antioch was planted, and under the united labors of Barnabas and Saul grew to great strength. We must be careful that, wherever in the providence of God we go, for business or anything else, we talk about Jesus. It should be the leading theme; and if we thus sow the truth by all waters, a great harvest will spring up and mature for God. Let us take our religion with us everywhere. Do not be afraid of confessing Christ. If in our business and pleasure we do all for the glory of God, our own souls will be blessed, and our lives will be fruitful in good works.

L. M. "Teach all the nations my commands;
I'm with you till the world shall end;
All power is trusted in my hands;
I can destroy, and I defend."

He spake, and light shone round his head;
On a bright cloud to heaven he rode:
They to the farthest nations spread
The grace of their ascended God.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also

may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love where-with thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

JOHN, xvii. 14-26.

This prayer has a world-wide sweep, and grasps the ages. Jesus prays that his people may be kept from the evil in the world. He would have them stay on earth until, like shocks of corn, they are fully ripe. They must be of full age before they enter upon the inheritance of glory. He prays that they may be sanctified. The Holy Spirit has already started the germ of holiness; but he must watch its growth, watering it with the dews of grace, strengthening by life's storms, and maturing it in heaven's sunshine, until the blossom has given place to fruit. With prophetic eye he sees in the future millions more to become his, and he embraces them. O, how we thank Thee, dear Jesus, for remembering us! He prays for their *union*—oneness with himself and the Father. He would have the Spirit illuminate, transform, and reign in their hearts, drawing them to each other as members of one family. So should the world be convinced of his Deity. He would have them with him in Glory at last. He will share with his bride everything he has; not a glory or a grace will he have alone. They are joint-heirs to the inheritance, and he bids them make free use of all. Did this prayer embrace you, dear reader? How happy your state! If not, do receive his word and believe on him, that you may be included.

Ss & 7s. He is fitting up a mansion,
Which eternally shall stand;
For my stay shall not be transient
In that holy, happy land.

CHORUS. There is rest, &c.

Death itself shall then be vanquished,
And his sting shall be withdrawn;
Shout for gladness, O ye ransomed,
Hail with joy the rising morn.

CHORUS. There is rest, &c.

Pain and sickness ne'er shall enter,
Grief nor woe my lot shall share;
But in that celestial centre
I a crown of life shall wear.

CHORUS. There is rest, &c.

Sing, O sing, ye heirs of glory!
Shout your triumph as you go!
Zion's gate will open for you,
You shall find an entrance through.

CHORUS. There is rest, &c.

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get it to a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter

was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;

36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

MATTHEW, xiv. 22-36.

The miracle of feeding the multitudes awakened great popular enthusiasm in Jesus' favor. They were ready to make him king. His disciples seem to have been carried away on this tide of popularity. Hence Jesus dismissed the people, and constrained his followers to take ship and go before him, while he withdrew to a mountain for prayer. He went, that we might know that seasons of great activity and prosperity call for special prayer. But few Christians can bear the test of prosperity as well as the trials of adversity. Though in the mountain and at prayer, he does not forget his own. He sees their troubles, and keeps harm away, though he does not hasten to their relief. He was there at the opportune moment. What can allay our fears, if not the voice and presence of Jesus? "It is I: fear not; take courage." He must be a very timid disciple whose fears are not allayed by such words. Self-confident Peter, seeking to imitate his Master, learns a good lesson, though at quite a cost. If he had not neglected prayer at the start, he might not have met with such a failure. Danger always drives us to God. Successful prayer need not be long. It is not *length*, but *strength*, that makes effectual prayer. No matter how great our peril, Jesus is equal to our relief.

12s & 11s.

Full oft wast thou found afar on the mountain,
As eventide spread her dark wing o'er the
wave:
Thou Son of the Highest, and life's endless
fountain,
Be with us, we pray thee, to bless and to
save.

And oft as the tumult of life's heaving billow
Shall toss our frail bark, driving wild o'er
night's deep,
Let thy healing wing be stretched over our
pillow,
And guard us from evil, though death
watch our sleep.

10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

16 She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

18 She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

20 She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.

22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he siteth among the elders of the land.

24 She maketh fine linen, and scilleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

PROVERBS, xxxi. 10-28.

A remarkable picture of an excellent woman! Inspiration here holds up a glass for every wife and mother to look into; and blessed is the family where the wife and mother sees in this her own features. What are her characteristics? A good wife, mother, prudent housekeeper, a kind mistress; she is pious, honest, industrious, wise, sweet-tempered, happy every day, and rejoicing because she fears no want for this life or the life to come. Her children grow up, and call her blessed; and her husband says, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." The influence of such a woman goes beyond her home, and is felt in society. She reaches out her hand to the needy; sick mothers and hungry children taste her good gifts, and the poor know her kind heart. Her husband is more respected for her influence, and his own power for good is greatly enhanced thereby. The fruit of her hands and the example of her blameless life make happy a multitude of others. There is no estimating the power of such a life. What if all matrons were such? What a change would be made at once in society! Certainly every Christian wife and mother should seek to be such.

L. M.

Go to the hungry—food impart;
To paths of peace the wanderer guide;
And lead the thirsty, panting heart
Where streams of living water glide.

Go, bid the bright and morning star
From Bethlehem's plains resplendent shine,
And, piercing through the gloom afar,
Shed heavenly light and love divine.

O, faint not in the day of toil,
When harvest waits the reaper's hand;
Go, gather in the glorious spoil,
And joyous in his presence stand.

Thy love a rich reward shall find
From Him who sits enthroned on high;
For they who turn the erring mind
Shall shine like stars above the sky.

1 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

2 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

4 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6 Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the

wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

8 And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. - *ISAIAH, xxxv. 1-10.*

How the prophets did strive to set forth, in the strongest language and the most expressive imagery, the glory of the church under Messiah's reign! No language seems extravagant, no figures hyperbolical; the thought is beyond words. The calling of the Gentiles, the glory of the Christian dispensation, the safety and happiness of individual believers, and the blessedness of heaven, are here portrayed. We should not expect to find Sharon's beautiful rose in full bloom in the desert; nevertheless, we shall. Not one, but an abundance of them. It is time for weak hands, feeble knees, and fearful hearts, casting away fear, to be strong. God is coming, the sword of vengeance in one hand, salvation for his people in the other. He opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, made the lame leap as the hart. Truly, in his day was this scripture fulfilled; nor has he ceased. In heathen lands, Christian villages have sprung up where only a few years since were broad wastes of desolation. A highway of holiness has been cast up, on which the redeemed of the Lord are walking with fearless step. It leads to the celestial city, where sorrow and sighing are unknown, where gladness rules, where the ransomed of the Lord meet to sing everlasting songs of joy.

C. M.

Daughter of Zion, from the dust
Exalt thy fallen head;
Again in thy Redeemer trust;
He calls thee from the dead.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength,
Thy beautiful array;
The day of freedom dawns at length,
The Lord's appointed day.

Rebuild thy walls, thy bounds enlarge,
And send thy heralds forth;
Say to the south, "Give up thy charge,"
And, "Keep not back, O north."

They come! they come! thine exiled bands,
Where'er they rest or roam,
Have heard thy voice in distant lands,
And hasten to their home.

1 And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams.

2 And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

3 And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt-offering, and I will go: peradventure the Lord will come to meet me, and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he went to a high place.

4 And God met Balaam: and he said unto him, I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram.

5 And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.

6 And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt-sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.

7 And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel.

8 How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied?

9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

10 Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

11 And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.

12 And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?

13 And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence.

NUMBERS, xxiii. 1-13.

Balak spared no pains, no expense, to get Israel cursed. Balaam's greed had overcome him. He was willing to curse Israel, if God would let him. God is the defence of his people, and his care secures them, though their enemies plan mischief and would gladly destroy them. But God, by his overruling power, turns the curse into a blessing. He is the refuge of his people from the ill-will and curses of all enemies. They were blessed in being a separate people. In all things, their religion included, they differed from other nations. God had called them out, and was training them for his own peculiar purpose. Separation from the world is the honor and duty of God's people. Come out from among them, he says. Their numbers were great then, but much greater now. Their number had disturbed Moab, and his fears were not allayed. It had been promised that they should be as the dust of the earth for number. The promise is being fulfilled. God's spiritual people are not few in numbers. We sometimes think so; but John tells us the multitude was greater than any man could number. Balaam desired to die their death, and know their future. Blessed in life, and death, and in their future state, truly a happy people are God's people. Do we belong to this happy people?

C. M. If I must die, O, let me die
In peace with all mankind,
And change these fleeting joys below
For pleasures more refined.

If I must die,—and die I must,—
Let some kind seraph come,
And bear me on his friendly wing
To my celestial home.

10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land wherein thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God.

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

GENESIS, xxviii. 10-22.

Jacob was now at Luz, and night had overtaken him. He lies down to sleep, with the earth for his bed, heaven's canopy for his roof, a rugged stone for his pillow. He has no mother's tender care to comfort him. But Jacob was not alone; an unseen friend was watching his every step. He would overrule this bitter experience for Jacob's good. God often sends his children into the depths for their good, but will allow no harm to come to them. Jacob's dream gladdened his heart. The ladder he saw reached heaven. He realized the presence of God, and acknowledged it as a strange surprise. He is not the only saint who has found that the absence of man is the nearness of God, and that life's darkest hours are fraught with new tokens of his love. The humanity and divinity of Jesus were pictured before the patriarch's faith-lit eyes. The ladder opened a way from a sin-cursed earth to a holy heaven; and so is Jesus the way for us to enter heaven. The ascent of a ladder is weariness to the flesh, it costs effort. There must be wrestling in prayer, and running in the way of God's commands. Jacob's fears were not realized. His lonely resting-place became a Bethel, a house of God. How often God's people have a like experience! They have many fears and dark forebodings; but God meets them with rich tokens of love, giving them occasion to build altars of praise.

L. M. There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads;
A place than all besides more sweet,—
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

There, there on eagles' wings we soar,
And sin and sense molest no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
While glory crowns the mercy-seat.

4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because

that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

16 For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

ACTS, viii. 4-17.

Saul was simply an observer of Stephen's martyrdom; yet he quickly became a fierce persecutor. But God overruled this persecution for the spread of the gospel. Philip's preaching in Samaria was the beginning of the great work of carrying the gospel to the Gentiles. Missions were born of persecution, and have grown under it. All efforts to suppress the gospel have only served to scatter it. There is nothing to be feared from the fires of persecution. God has his eye on the men who build them. They cannot burn beyond his permission, and a breath from him will put out all flames. The presence of Jesus is a source of joy in the heart, the family, the city. The joy-bells announce his coming, and ring in louder tones the longer he stays. Dear reader, has the joy gone out of your heart; are you full of doubts, fears, and anxieties? Ask Jesus to come in; he is waiting for the invitation. One look on his smiling face, so radiant with heavenly love, will remove doubts and fears. You will not care so much for the things of this life, but will rather believe and obey Jesus. The news of a great revival travels fast, and good men love to see the works of God. No doubt Peter and John gladly availed themselves of the privilege.

7s & 6s. The morning light is breaking,
The darkness disappears;
The sons of earth are waking
To penitential tears:
Each breeze that sweeps the ocean
Brings tidings from afar
Of nations in commotion,
Prepared for Zion's war.

Rich dews of grace come o'er us
In many a gentle shower,
And brighter scenes before us
Are opening every hour:
Each cry, to heaven going,
Abundant answers brings,
And heavenly gales are blowing,
With peace upon their wings.

1 Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth

with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way: but let it rather be healed.

HEBREWS, xii. 1-13.

What a vast multitude is looking upon us from heaven, as well as earth, as we run the Christian race! Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, the best men that have lived on earth, our dearest friends, parents, companions, brothers, sisters, children, all looking on with deep interest, noting our success. What an incentive to earnest endeavor! Trusting in God, they endured every trial, and were made victorious. We should put away fears and all easily besetting sins. There is every reason for the strongest faith. It is in looking to him, away from self and our sins, that we find peace. We have many trials, all in the way of fatherly chastisements and for our good. But we are to look to Christ, for he is "all in all." We must not forget, it is not our hold of Christ that saves us, but his hold of us; it is not our joy, but Christ, that saves us; not our faith even, but Christ's blood and merits. Faith is indeed the instrument, and we shall not be saved without it; yet it is Christ who saves us. To him must we look in our sufferings and chastenings, since he is the author of our hope and the finisher of our faith. Let no hopes or fears come between us and Jesus.

L.M. Away, my unbelieving fear!
Fear shall in me no more have place;
My Saviour doth not yet appear,
He hides the brightness of his face;
But shall I therefore let him go,
And basely to the tempter yield?
No, in the strength of Jesus, no;
I never will give up my shield.

In hope, believing against hope,
Jesus, my Lord, my God, I claim;
Jesus, my strength, shall lift me up;
Salvation is in Jesus' name.
To me he soon shall bring it nigh;
My soul shall then outstrip the wind,
On wings of love mount up on high,
And leave the world and sin behind.

9 And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah, thy servant, down to the host:

11 And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host.

12 And the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and all the children of the east, lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea-side for multitude.

13 And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley-bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it that the tent lay along.

14 And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

15 And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned

into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16 And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

17 And he said unto them, Look on me and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.

18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. JUDGES, vii. 9-21.

It is not every child of God that is fit for special service. God has to test his men, and see who are worthy. It would seem like a small number; yet God conquers by few as well as many. But they must be bold of heart, brave in spirit, ready in obedience. Here their simple duty was to break their pitchers, and cry, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." What else have we to do? We must shine; we must let nothing hide our light. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." We must blow the trumpet also. Christ crucified must be proclaimed. The gospel must be carried to every one. Can the church have a better battle-cry than this, "The sword of the Lord, and of the Christian"? It is God's work. He must do it; not a soul can be saved without it. But he uses agents; we have something to do under his direction. When God nerves the arm of his servants, and gives an edge to the sword, then wonderful results will follow. Be obedient, active, working for God, and he will make you successful.

P. M. Under our Captain, Jesus Christ,
Battling for the Lord!
We've listed for this mortal life,
Battling for the Lord!

We'll fight against the powers of sin,
Battling for the Lord!
In favor of our heavenly King,
Battling for the Lord!

And when our warfare here is o'er,
Battling for the Lord!
This strife we'll leave, and war no more,
Battling for the Lord!

Our friends and kindred there we'll meet,
On the heavenly shore!
And gird our arms at Jesus' feet,
On the heavenly shore!

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but

whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

MATTHEW, xx. 20-34.

Mark tells us that the sons joined their mother in this ambitious request. We see how utterly the disciples had failed to understand the teaching of Jesus in regard to his kingdom. In this kingdom, the highest eminence will result from the severest labors and sufferings for the good of others. It is on the principle that God has decided to mete out his rewards. He who would become chief, must first become servant. Jesus added to his words that remarkable act of washing the disciples' feet. By word and example he sought to free their minds from ambitious and worldly motives. It is easy to condemn this spirit in others; but are we sure that it finds no cherishing in our own hearts? Are we willing to take the humblest place, toil the hardest, suffer the most, and then leave all with Jesus to give us what his love prompts? We need to cultivate an humble spirit. Very simple, touching, and suggestive is this story of the healing of the blind men. The multitude had no sympathy with them, and commanded silence. But they had suffered too long to let this one opportunity pass. They cried the louder, lest Jesus should not hear them. How natural! They gave to him a direct answer,—“Open our eyes.”

¶. M. And didst thou, Jesus, condescend,
When veiled in human clay,
To heal the sick, the lame, the blind,
And drive disease away?
Didst thou regard the beggar's cry,
And cause the blind to see?
Thou Son of David, hear—O, hear—
Have mercy, too, on me.

And didst thou pity mortal woe,
And sight and health restore?
O pity, Lord, and save my soul,
Which needs thy mercy more.
Didst thou thy trembling servant raise,
When sinking in the wave?
I perish, Lord: O, save my soul,
For thou alone canst save.

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banqueting, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

6 For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

1 PETER, iv. 1-14.

The apostle reminds us of Christ's sufferings, that we may keep them before us and have in him a lively example. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Lord. Our Lord led a suffering life. He endured great and constant contradiction of sinners. We must expect nothing less if we would live godly lives. But we may find great comfort in the thought, that if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him, and be glorified together. Christ suffered to take away sin; if we would share in the benefits of his redemption, we must renounce evil, cost what it will. Cherishing sinful desires will frustrate the grace of Christ. Our earnest endeavors to be freed from sin will show that we are truly Christ's followers, and are united to him by a living faith. If we are his, we must not think it strange that we have these fiery trials. If they come upon us for Christ's sake, they are the testimony of his grace toward us. But if the righteous are saved with difficulty, what of the ungodly? Are we yet unsaved? What hope have we? There is no salvation out of Christ. No amount of good works can save us, and we have none, for all we do has the taint of sin upon it. Death and the judgment are at hand, and where will you appear?

7s. On that great, that awful day,
This vain world shall pass away,
And before the Maker stand
All the creatures of his hand.

Then shall all the nations meet
At th' eternal judgment-seat,
And unveiled before his eye
All the works of man shall lie.

O, in that destroying hour,
Source of goodness, Source of power,
Show thou, of thine own free grace,
Help unto a helpless race.

Hear, and pity; hear, and aid;
Spare the creatures thou hast made;
Fold us with the sheep that stand
Pure and safe at thy right hand.

1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

1 JOHN, iv. 1-18.

How often the remark is made, "If I were only *sure* that I am a Christian!" Can we not be sure? Is it such a mysterious matter that we must live in uncertainty? By no means. God's word has laid down so clearly the evidences, that no man need be in doubt. Does the Spirit of Christ dwell in you? Are you obeying his commands? These are two infallible marks of union with Jesus. Who cannot test himself by these? If we believe in Christ, love will prompt us to hear him in all things, and it will be the very life of our delights to keep his commandments. If Christ were now among us, we should be constantly showing our love by marks of tenderness, ministering to his wants, and adding to his comfort. He is here; he lives in his people. He has touchingly said, that every act of kindness to them is noted, appreciated, and remembered by him, just the same as though it were done expressly to himself. Brotherly love, shown in acts of kindness, is a sure evidence that God's saving truth is working in us, and is a part of that holiness so indispensable to fellowship with Christ. It is not that we should love all we see in them; but the recognizing and loving them as possessing something of Christ, and striving to become more like him.

8s & 7s.

God is love; his mercy brightens

All the path in which we rove;

Bliss he wakes, and woo he lightens;

God is wisdom, God is love.

Chance and change are busy ever;

Man decays, and ages move;

But his mercy waneth never;

God is wisdom, God is love.

Even the hour that darkest seemeth

Will his changeless goodness prove:

From the gloom his brightness streameth.

God is wisdom, God is love.

He with earthly cares entwineth

Hope and comfort from above.

Everywhere his glory shineth;

God is wisdom, God is love.

18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of

hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

24 And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

25 Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

26 I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

27 He delivcreth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

DANIEL, vi. 18-28.

If we would sleep well and peacefully, we must have a conscience void of offence. The king had spoken encouraging words to Daniel, but he could find no excuse for his own folly and injustice. He ate no supper; trouble takes away the appetite. He forbade music; nothing is more vexing to a heavy heart than merry songs. At the earliest dawn, and with many fears, he hastened to the lions' den. His trembling voice showed his deep concern and trouble, as he called to Daniel. The lions' mouths were closed. The angel's presence had turned the lions' den into a very palace. The king's voice trembled; but Daniel was calm and trusting. Daniel said, "O king, live forever!" We may be bold and cheerful in our obedience to the law of God. Our enemies may seem to triumph; but God will turn the tables in his good time, and overwhelm them with destruction, while he triumphantly delivers those who trust and obey him. He makes the wrath of man not only praise him, but extend the knowledge of his kingdom. Out of this seeming evil, what good came to Daniel! He saw an apt illustration of Samson's riddle, "Out of the eater" — a lion too — "came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." Now, shall we be afraid to obey God? Can we not say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him"?

L. M. Like floods the angry nations rise,
And aim their rage against the skies;
Vain floods, that aim their rage so high;
At his rebuke the billows die.

Forever shall his throne endure;
His promise stands forever sure;
And everlasting holiness
Becomes the dwellings of his grace.

17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

MATTHEW, xxvi. 17-30.

The passover was the greatest of the Jewish festivals. Jerusalem was always thronged with Jews at this time, who came to celebrate the feast. There were few public houses, hence the citizens proffered their private dwellings to their friends. But no one opened his door to Jesus. He must provide for himself and his disciples. It was his last passover,—yea, the world's last one; henceforth the type was to be merged in the anti-type. That which had so long told the story of Israel's first-born saved by the angels passing over their blood-sprinkled door-posts, was to find its significance henceforth in Jesus,—God's Lamb, slain to save men. No wonder that Jesus had looked forward with intense anxiety. The little company were shocked by the assurance of Jesus that a traitor was among them. Can we wonder that each one asked that question, which every Christian should often put to his Lord, "Is it I?" Alone with the disciples, Christ instituted his supper, telling them plainly what that bread and wine signified. "My body, my blood," are here symbolized. I am the Lamb of God, whose body eaten, whose blood drank, can alone give life to the soul. These are memorials of my love. Take, eat, drink, in remembrance of me. Think not of self, nor of others, but remember me; and this do until called to the marriage supper of the Lamb in my Father's house.

L. M.

Before the mournful scene began,

He took the bread, and blessed, and brake;
What love through all his actions ran!

What wondrous words of grace he spake!

"This is my body, broke for sin;
Receive and eat the living food;"
Then took the cup, and blessed the wine;
"Tis the new covenant in my blood."

1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and

said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

10 And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

GENESIS, xii. 1-13.

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This was a prophecy of Jesus, for he is the world's great blessing. Abraham could not take in the fullness of this promise, nor behold all its wonders. But Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." Was it not in this promise that he caught a glimpse of a coming Messiah? If we desire to see like wonders, and share like joys; to be blessed while living, when dying, and in eternity; to enjoy God's favor, to rest under his sheltering wings, and lean on his mighty arm in the hour of death, we may find all this happiness stored up for us in Christ Jesus. If we would have peace always, and be able to say, God is my father, Jesus my Saviour and brother; the Holy Spirit is my sanctifier, teacher, and comforter; the saints are my brethren; the angels are my constant guardians; "heaven is my home; a throne of glory is my seat; a weight of glory is my crown," all this may be ours by faith in Christ. We may know that all things shall work together for our good, that "the wheels of providence revolve for our welfare," and that nothing can harm us. If we are truly children of the Father of the faithful, if we are trusting in Jesus for salvation and eternal blessedness, then innumerable other blessings shall be ours.

C. M.

Abram obeyed the Lord's command,
From his own country driven;
By faith he sought a promised land,
But found his rest in heaven.

Thus through life's pilgrimage we stray,
The promise in our eye:
By faith we walk the narrow way
That leads to joy on high.

5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God.

10 And Joshua said, Hitherby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Gergashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon a heap.

14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) 16 That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zarethan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

JOSHUA, iii. 5-17.

It was no easy task which was before Joshua. The Jordan was then swollen by the melting of the snow on Lebanon, and the banks were overflowed. It seemed to be impossible to cross that river; but faith "laughs at impossibilities." God cut off the waters, and left a dry bed for Israel. This miracle proved to the people that God had not left them, though he had taken Moses to himself. It was a new pledge of his love, assuring them that he would give them success in driving out their enemies, and give them complete possession. How replete with proofs of protection and help from our God are these incidents in Israel's history! Let them come to our hearts, assuring us that God is with us in our work, that he is equal to every emergency, and able to overcome all difficulties. As we look at our heaven-appointed work, do we see many obstacles in our way? Take courage. Follow the divine guidance, for it leads to success and glory. "Jordan has become the hallowed and beautiful symbol of the river of death, with the heavenly Canaan beyond. At the end of life's pilgrimage, if our faith holds on, we shall see the waters divide before us, or else the shining ones waiting at the brink to bear us across the river to the celestial city." But if we have no trust in Christ, this will be a fearful stream to cross.

C. M. On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie.

O the transporting, rapturous scene,
That rises to my sight!
Sweet fields, arrayed in living green,
And rivers of delight.

1 In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.

3 Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying,

4 Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?

5 Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways.

6 Ye have sown much, and bring in little: ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways.

8 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.

9 Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

10 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.

11 And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor of the hands.

HAGGAI, i. 1-11.

Haggai was the first prophet after the return of Israel from the captivity. Immediately on their arrival the foundations of the temple had been laid, but the Samaritans had secured an interdict from the Persian king in opposition to Cyrus' decree. The Jews lost their courage, neglected the building of the temple, and turned their attention to building and adorning their own houses, cultivating their fields and vineyards, and tending their flocks. Hence these reproofs of God by this prophet. They should trust God, and rebuild his house. This sin was not Israel's only. It is very common among God's people. Contributions to benevolent enterprises are withheld or given in a stinted measure, and this is called economy. But it is a great mistake. Men impoverish themselves thereby. "Our God has a method in his providence by which he can exceed our endeavors beyond our expectations, or can defeat our plans to our confusion or dismay: by a turn of his hand he can steer our vessel in a profitable channel, or run it aground in poverty and bankruptcy." The Lord enriches the liberal; but he leaves the miserly to poverty of purse, or, worse still, leanness of soul. He trusts large sums to those who will use them well. "He gives cart-loads to those who give by the bushel." Selfishness seeks its own: godliness seeks first the kingdom of God, and has all other things added.

C. M. My soul, how lovely is the place
To which thy God resorts!
'Tis heaven to see his smiling face,
Though in his earthly courts.

There the great Monarch of the skies
His saving power displays,
And light breaks in upon our eyes
With kind and quickening rays.

With his rich gifts the heavenly Dove
Descends and fills the place
While Christ reveals his wondrous love,
And sheds abroad his grace.

There, mighty God, thy words declare
The secrets of thy will;
And still we seek thy mercies there,
And sing thy praises still.

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. ROM. xiv. 1-14.

This is confessedly a difficult matter; nothing is easier for many Christians than harsh judgments and unkind words; but if we are Christ's, we must not shrink from duty because obstacles are in the way. If a man is a true Christian, he should be treated as such. He may be weak in the faith, scrupulous about externals; or he may be strong in faith and comprehensive in knowledge, and use his liberty in what would be sin for another; but if he makes God's will the rule of his life, and God's glory his constant object, he is to be regarded as a Christian. More love to Christ will beget more love to his followers, which will correct this evil. This will make the weak brother feel that he may be mistaken, and the strong one ready to deny himself rather than offend. Have we fallen into this very common habit of judging and speaking unkindly of what we regard as a weakness in others? Let us remember that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." We can deny ourselves. Jesus dealt tenderly with the faults of his disciples; let us do the same. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." The disciples of Christ should be charitable in thought and self-denying in acts.

C. M. How blest is he who fears the Lord,

And follows his commands,
Who lends the poor without reward,
Or gives with liberal hands!

As pity dwells within his breast
To all the sons of need,
So God shall answer his request
With blessings on his seed.

In times of danger and distress,
Some beams of light shall shine,
To show the world his righteousness,
And give him peace divine.

His works of piety and love
Remain before the Lord;
Sweet peace on earth, and joys above,
Shall be his sure reward.

1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

2 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

3 And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.

4 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive:

5 But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

7 Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

8 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God. ZECH. xiii. 1-9.

The promise of the fountain includes both the remission of sin and the gift of sanctifying grace. Christ's blood supplies this fountain, and that cleanses from all sin. He is exalted to give both repentance and remission of sins, and where he gives the one he follows with the other. Sin pollutes both body and soul, and nothing can wash away its stains but Christ's blood. Singularly enough, while all other blood pollutes, Christ's blood cleanses. This is an inexhaustible fountain. There is mercy enough in God and merit enough in Christ for the forgiving and cleansing of the chief of sinners. It is an open fountain, and all may come who will, and enjoy its benefits. Through Christ all that believe are justified, and are washed from their sins in his blood, that they may be to our God kings and priests. His grace will take away the dominion of sin. We are also told of Christ's sufferings, by which this fountain was to be opened and supplied. God calls the sword to smite the Shepherd for the sake of the flock. He was the Shepherd, and yet he was the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Thus, he was God and man. O wondrous fountain! Have we all washed here? Come to the fountain every night, and wash away sin's polluting stains. It is an open, freely-flowing fountain; all may come.

C. M. There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

I do believe, I now believe,
That Jesus died for me;
And through his blood, his precious blood,
I shall from sin be free.

Dear, dying Lamb! Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply
Redeeming love has been my theme
And shall be till I die.

1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

4 That the Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou callest me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the Lord called yet again, Samuel: and Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.

8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me.

And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

11 And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

1 SAMUEL, iii 1-14

We have now been reading a very interesting story about the great God conversing with a little boy, and sending a message to a minister's family by him, that made the ears of those who heard it tingle. "Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child." How many ministers even, as well as others, have no confidence in the conversion of children; they discountenance it! If God speaks to their children, they do not encourage a response. God called Samuel three times before Eli encouraged him to cherish the call. O that every little boy and girl would say as Samuel did, "Speak; for thy servant heareth"! Some suppose Samuel was only six years of age when God thus called him. Jesus says, "Suffer little children to come unto me." A very intelligent father in Philadelphia says his six children were all converted before they were five years old. Think of the peril we must be in when the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to convert the world, seeks with so much earnestness the salvation of a child before he is five years old! Fathers and mothers, will you not seek more earnestly the salvation of your children? Let nothing prevent you. Pray, weep, and labor, until your children shall say, "Speak; for thy servant heareth."

C. M. Lord, though no more thy hallowed form
Can greet our children's sight,
Grant that, whilst life their breasts shall warm,
Thy word may guide them right.

They may not feel thine earthly touch;
But be thy Spirit given,
To make them holy: "for of such
The kingdom is of heaven."

1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

5 Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

13 Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boasting: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

JAMES, iv. 1-17

“Nearer, my God, to Thee.” How constantly should this prayer ascend! God is always near us literally; but there is such a thing as coming into the Holy of holies, the very presence-chamber of God, and communing with him, as man looks upon and talks with his friend. Faith, prayer, meditation, make God real, cause us to feel his majesty, and to see the glory of his attributes and perfections. Such actual communion with God, and such positive views of his character, as holy, just, and good, will produce certain results in us. We shall be kept from the sins of which the apostle writes in our selection. Selfishness will be overcome, and our desires for earthly enjoyments will be wisely regulated, so as not to make us envious or contentious. We shall love prayer, and shall be humble and submissive to God. We shall resist the devil, cleanse our hands from evil, weep over our sins, and purify our hearts. We shall be kept from evil speaking and censorious judgments. Recognizing the Divine Providence which directs all our steps, we shall always say, “If the Lord will, we shall do this.” We shall be kept from sin by doing what we know to be good.

6s & 4s. Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

There let my way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee.
Nearer to thee!

35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead.

It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

1 CORINTHIANS, xv. 35-49.

One of the great mysteries of the resurrection has ever been as to *identity*. Paul disposes of it by a significant and beautiful analogy. "The sower does not expect to reap the selfsame seed which he casts into the ground, but the same *kind* of grain,—wheat from wheat, barley from barley; but what he reaps grows out of the germ of the seed that he sows, which is quickened into life by the death of its own body. So there is within man a life-principle, or germ, of spirit-power, which is capable of being hereafter quickened and clothed with a body by him who gives to every grain and plant its own body, answering to the seed from which it springs." Here the natural rules; but in the resurrected body the spiritual will rule, and mould the body according to its own laws, and use it after its own will. Sown in dishonor, dying because of its degradation by sin, going back to dust, it will be raised and clothed with beauty and majesty like Christ's own body. Too weak to cope with disease and death, it is sown in weakness, but will be raised with power to resist all. But who can tell what that wondrous body will be? The apostle John tells us, "we shall be like him." Precious thoughts! We cannot take in all their meaning now. But how wondrous is the destiny of every believer in Christ!

C. M. When the last trumpet's awful voice
This rending earth shall shake,
When opening graves shall yield their charge,
And dust to life awake,—

Those bodies that corrupted fell
Shall incorrupted rise,
And mortal forms shall spring to life
Immortal in the skies.

Behold, what heavenly prophets sung
Is now at last fulfilled—
That Death should yield his ancient reign,
And, vanquished, quit the field.

Let Faith exalt her joyful voice,
And thus begin to sing:
"O Grave, where is thy triumph now?
And where, O Death, thy sting?"

1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.

6 For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I

will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Whereto shall we return?

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Whereto have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.

13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?

14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?

MALACHI, iii. 1-14.

God here asks us to prove him, to put his promises to a fair test. Did any one of us ever take a promise God had made, and, putting it to a fair trial, find that it failed? Do we believe without a doubt he is able to pour us out a great blessing? Do we believe he is willing? Do we want him to do it? Let us prove him now. He tells us we are "cursed with a curse," for we have robbed him. Are you lean and barren? It is because you have robbed God. Are the heavens brass, and the earth iron? Is the Bible sealed to you? Is it hard work to exhort the wicked to come to Christ? It is because you have robbed God: robbed him of your affections; of much of your time; of your talents and property, perhaps. Perhaps his ordinances have not been kept; the widow and fatherless oppressed or defrauded; or we may not have been kind and courteous to the stranger. Have any of us acted as though it were a vain thing to serve God, or to keep his ordinances? God always sends his messengers before his servants, and prepares the way for success. Let us labor to-day with all our heart for God and our fellows. If we are weak, Christ is strong enough for us all. "Lo, I am with you alway."

L. M. Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe,—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down,
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the

laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

MATTHEW, xx. 1-16.

We must consider this parable as a whole, rather than its separate parts. It was designed to check any tendency to a self-righteous and mercenary spirit. We see, that while there is an abundant recompense for all that is cheerfully done for God, his gifts are still the bestowments of free bounty and sovereign grace. We need not make bargains with God; we have only to trust him, and whatever is right he will give us. It is all of grace, our being called, as well as the recompense; and hence it is the Master's perfect right to dispense his awards according to a scale and method of his own. God is a wonderful and prompt paymaster, and gives far more than we deserve for all we do for him; so we have only to do our work faithfully and well, and we certainly shall have what is right. Let us go to work to-day, and be in earnest about the work we have too long neglected. Our motive should be fidelity to the Master. The work itself will be its own compensation, and the reward of free grace will far exceed our most sanguine expectations. There is work enough in the Lord's vineyard for every one; none need be idle. There is no excuse for any one.

S. M. Laborers of Christ, arise,
And gird you for the toil;
The dew of promise from the skies
Already cheers the soil.

Go where the sick recline,
Where mourning hearts deplore;
And where the sons of sorrow pine,
Dispense your hallowed lore.

Be faith, which looks above,
With prayer, your constant guest,
And wrap the Saviour's changeless love
A mantle round your breast.

So shall you share the wealth
That earth may ne'er despoil,
And the blest gospel's saving health
Repay your arduous toil.

1 He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.

2 And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter-weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar.

3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side;

4 And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

5 And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity:

6 Slay utterly old and young, both maids,

and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

7 And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city.

8 And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord God! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?

9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not.

10 And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head.

11 And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.

EZEKIEL, ix. 1-11.

God cannot look upon sin with any allowance. He must punish it: his very being necessitates it. Jerusalem was full of iniquity; the sins of the people were crying to heaven for vengeance; and at length God came down in judgment. But there were guiltless ones who were sighing and crying over these abominations, and he took special pains to preserve them from the destroying sword. He put a mark on their foreheads, that became their shield. All others fell before the destructive weapon: beginning at the very altar of God, with those who had ministered there, but had polluted it. This selection is very instructive. The Lord will save his people: but those who refuse his love, despise his grace, and love sin, will suddenly be cut off, and that without remedy. How momentous the question, "Have we the mark of God on our foreheads?" It is a blood mark, made with the blood of the Lamb. He who has it, and trusts in it, knows that he is safe. The spirit of Jesus dwells in him; he lives a life of obedience; has a heart full of love to Jesus and his people, and rests in faith. He sighs over the abominations of sin, knows that the day of retribution will speedily come, and beseeches men to flee to Christ. The sword of divine justice is sheathed now; let us flee to Christ at once.

C. M. Sinner, beware! —the axe of death
Is raised, and aimed at thee:
A while thy Maker spares thy breath;
Beware, O barren tree!

28

"The axe of death, at one sharp stroke,
Shall make my justice known;
Each bough shall tremble at the shock
Which cuts the cumberer down."

1 After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

2 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

4 And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

6 And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

7 And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

8 And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

9 And he said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each peace one against another: but the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him.

13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

GENESIS, xv. 1-17.

It was very comforting and refreshing to the patriarch to receive these assurances of favor and blessing. But it cost him something to live this life of faith and trust, as the world counts gains and losses. It was something to leave his childhood's home, not knowing where he was going, and not sure of an abiding place. When he had conquered the confederate kings, and masses of gold were at his feet, it cost something to say, "Take the goods to thyself." It was practising self-denial, which is always crossing to human nature. But God assured Abraham that he should be no loser. He would be "a shield to him, and his exceeding great reward." Is there not a rich and instructive lesson for us here? He who would live a life of faith, will necessarily have to practise this same self-denial. Over the entrance to this kingdom of heaven Jesus has written, "Deny thyself." The heart must have no throne but for Christ. Every joy must centre in him; every flower of refreshment must be gathered from him. This costs something. But what is given up? Husks, shadows, vanity. What is gained? We gain Christ, and in him is the substance of all good. He is a shield from every danger, the soul's exceeding great reward. Having Christ, what more can we need or desire? He is all and in all.

P. M. Faith is the rainbow's form

Hung on the brow of heaven,
The glory of the passing storm,
The pledge of mercy given;
It is the bright triumphal arch
Through which the saints to glory march.

The faith that works by love,

And purifies the heart,
A foretaste of the joys above
To mortals can impart;
It bears us through this earthly strife,
And triumphs in immortal life.

1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruption, gravity, sincerity.

8 Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be

ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

TITUS, ii. 1-15.

The purpose of Christ in redeeming us from the curse of the law was to redeem us also from all sin, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people. The Holy Spirit works in us to complete what grace has begun. To this end he gives us in the inspired writings, instructions adapted to all stations and all ages. The aged are to be obedient to the law of Christ, and are examples to the younger. The young are to be sober, zealous, and Christ-like. In the servant's position, the same law of faithfulness is applicable; and the humblest life may adorn the doctrine and illustrate the teaching of the Saviour. It is not enough that the believer should be guilty of no positive wrong; he must let his light shine, that others may see his good works, and be led to glorify Christ. His example is to be a living power, exerting a strong influence over others. His speech must not be intemperate or rash, but sound. Nothing so commends the gospel to others as a godly life. It is the privilege and duty of every believer so to teach Christ. You may not be eloquent in speech, or specially gifted in any way; but you can commend the gospel by a humble, devout, Christ-like life.

7s. Would you win a soul to God?
Tell him of a Saviour's blood,
Once for dying sinners spilt,
To atone for all their guilt.

Tell him how the streams did glide
From his hands, his feet, his side;
How his head with thorns was crowned,
And his heart in sorrow drowned.

Tell him it was sovereign grace
Led thee first to seek his face,
Made thee choose the better part,
Wrought salvation in thy heart.

Tell him of that liberty
Wherewith Jesus makcs us free;
Sweetly speak of sins forgiven—
Earnest of the joys of heaven.

1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all others, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil;

not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong; and this also we wish, even your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS, xiii. 1-14.

Paul was obliged, as the servant of the Lord, to be true to his word, and use his apostolic authority in the punishment of obstinate, incorrigible sinners. God will bear long, and be gracious, but there is a limit to his forbearance. When that limit is reached, judgment will surely follow. Paul urges his readers to self-examination, that they may know whether they are in the faith, for being sure of that would show that he was truly Christ's apostle. This is a very clear duty of every one professing to be Christ's. Self-deception is a very easy matter. We are blind to our own faults; hence, need to examine ourselves often. God has given us very clear tests. Do we love his word, prayer, his people? Have we the witness of the indwelling spirit? It will tell us if we are the sons of God. Are we sincerely anxious for, and earnestly seeking the salvation of others? Are we growing in grace? Such questions as these, seriously considered, and thoughtfully answered to our own hearts, will enable us to know whether we are the dupes of self-deception. We cannot afford to be in doubt on this subject. If we are not sure, we should have this question settled at once. The issues are too momentous, the consequences of deception too awful, for us to rest easy. We may know our true state.

78. "Tis a point I long to know, —
Oft it causes anxious thought, —
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?
If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name.

Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy people's sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.
Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day.

1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

JOHN, xi. 1-19.

How very natural it was for Martha and Mary to send for Jesus when they were in affliction. Who among us does not feel the same? If sickness or death visit us, we want some one to pray for us, to ask Jesus to come and bless us. They sent for Jesus did not go. So with many persons: they rely too much on the prayers of others. Jesus did not come until they went for him themselves. So with us: if we want God to bless us, let us go ourselves and ask him. Christ's delay greatly disheartened Mary, so that she was hardly disposed to do anything, not even to go after him. How often Christians become discouraged because the answer to their prayer is delayed! If Christ delays, we should always believe it is for some reason that will be satisfactory to us. How sweetly Jesus says to us all in our trials, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Mary and Martha were the happier in the end for Christ's delay. Their love to him was greatly increased, and their faith strengthened. So with all who trust, and wait for him. "Weeping may continue for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Christ's delay did not prove his want of love to them. "Jesus loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus." So it may be with us.

S. H. M.

Friend after friend departs:
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts
That finds not here an end:
Were this frail world our final rest,
Living or dying, none were blest.

There is a world above,
Where parting is unknown;
A long eternity of love,
Formed for the good alone;
And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that glorious sphere.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

JOHN, xi. 20-37.

How comforting were these wonderful words of Jesus to Martha! She had faith in the future resurrection, but Jesus would turn her thoughts to himself as the ever-living and life-giving Saviour. "You are weeping," says Christ, "for your dead and buried brother. Look upon me, and dry your tears; for I am the life, and all the life your brother had was from me. I can give it back, for I am the resurrection as well as the life." This is the central thought of this whole chapter; and what a world of comfort is in it! Who can measure the effect of it in this world of tears and death? "Jesus wept." Two little words, but of infinite value. How truly did Jesus bear our griefs and carry our sorrows! He put himself into the closest, tenderest sympathy with our natures. Tears have always a wondrous voice. But such tears, flowing from such a source! In the weeping ones before him, Jesus saw the miniature picture of the world of human suffering, and the sight opened the fountain of tears. The weeping of Jesus moved the hearts of those who were not disciples, and revealed his character in a new light. They saw that he could pity those in sorrow. What clear proofs of his humanity, and how soon he gave evidence of his divinity!

L. M.

Break off your tears, ye saints, and tell
How high your great Deliverer reigns;
Sing how he spoiled the hosts of hell,
And led the monster Death in chains.

Say, Live forever, wondrous King!
Born to redeem, and strong to save;
Then ask the monster, Where's thy sting?
And, Where's thy victory, boasting grave?

39 And he came out, and went, as he was wout, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed.

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and

was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

LUKE, xxii. 39-51.

The final hour — for which Jesus had come into the world, and to which he had looked forward with anxiety for thousands of years — had now come. It is not strange that he sought that chosen place of retirement where he could pass those moments of extreme agony of spirit in which he submitted himself wholly to his Father's will. Who can understand this scene, or in any measure comprehend his fearful sufferings? The three evangelists have struggled to find language to express the *intensity* of our Lord's anguish; but words failed. Evidently, it was not his anticipation of bodily tortures, his weariness, scourging, or crucifixion which prostrated him on his face, and caused him to writhe in agony, while the bloody sweat exuded from the pores of his skin. Not this. His sufferings were altogether beyond expression or comprehension of sinful man; bearing that awful curse which he was thus taking from the guilty. The world's sins and woes were upon him. It was their mountain-weight which he was struggling under, by which he was crushed to the earth, and made to bleed from every pore. It was for you and me that Jesus passed through this agony of suffering. He did it to save us from eternal death. How the weight of sin would have crushed us! Gratitude, and love, and unwearied service should be given to him. How little this will be for what he has given us!

S. M. Alone in sorrow see him bow,
As all our griefs he bears;
Not words may tell his anguish now,
But sweat, and blood, and tears.

There prostrate on the earth he lies,
God's well-beloved Son,
But still the fainting sufferer cries,
Father, thy will be done.

For me he prays—I hear him pray;
He will my soul receive;
Now, Jesus, take my sins away,
Now, Jesus, I believe!

Can I forget the tears and blood
Which there he shed for me?
They flow, a constant, cleansing flood,
Abundant, rich, and free.

1 And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

3 And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

5 And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

7 The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of

my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that swore unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

10 And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

12 And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

GENESIS, xxiv. 1-19

The story of Isaac and Rebekah is one of the sweet idyls of the Bible, illustrating faith and love. Sarah was dead; Abraham was old, and wanted Isaac established in a home of his own, with a God-fearing wife, before he left him. Too old for such a journey himself, he sends his faithful servant after a bride for Isaac. Matrimonial arrangements were made by parents. With costly presents the servant started, and God's angels went before him. Dear, precious ones! they are our "ministering spirits." Rebekah's beautiful face and affable manners surprised even the aged servant. She more than answered the picture he had in mind. She was comely, friendly, hospitable, kind. What more could he desire? She was just the young lady he wanted for Isaac. The bridal ornaments were at once presented to her. What an admirable pattern, in many respects, of the way in which matrimonial connections should be formed among Christians! Worldly considerations were put entirely in the background, while it was required that the bride should be a member of the household of faith. The guidance of God was most earnestly and prayerfully sought to aid the judgment of man. Let the many unhappy homes teach us the great importance of divine guidance.

C. M. Thou boundless Source of every good,
Our best desires fulfill;
We would adore thy wondrous grace,
And mark thy sovereign will.

Do thou direct our steps aright;
Help us thy name to fear;
And give us grace to watch and pray,
And strength to persevere.

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together.

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon

the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son.

14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

15 And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son,

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seas-hore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies:

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

GENESIS, xxii. 5-18.

What a trial of Abraham's faith! "Offer thy son Isaac as a burnt-offering." This son, in whom all nations are to be blest! Am I mistaken? No: the voice is clear. God asks it, and I will obey. No questionings, no staggering of his faith. I do not know what God means by this strange command; but he knows, and will make it plain. So with us: if we see or hear God's commands, shall we not at once move forward and obey? No matter whether we feel like it or not. I do not suppose Abraham felt like killing Isaac. His feelings were all opposed to it, no doubt. Some say, "I will do this or that, if I feel like it." Rather let us say, "I will obey God, whether I feel like it or not." Abraham's trial was a great comfort to him afterward when God said, "In blessing, I will bless thee." So when God leads us through any trial of our faith and trust in him, our faith is greatly strengthened, and our life and home made much happier by it. With what confidence and pleasure Abraham built that memorial pile, inscribing it, "The Lord will provide." Can we not say of all the past, even in trials, "The Lord has provided?" With the spirit of obedience in our hearts, let us gather strength and courage from what we have read, and say, "The Lord will provide." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

C. M. And, if our dearest comforts fall
Before his sovereign will,
He never takes away our all;
Himself he gives us still.

29

Our sorrows in the scale he weighs,
And measures out our pains;
The wildest storm his word obeys;
His word its rage restrains.

1 Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by manifestation of the truth, commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our

hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you. 2 CORINTHIANS, iv. 1-12.

Faith in Christ changes the relations of temporal and spiritual things wonderfully. It changes our estimates of the sorrows and joys of earth, in contrast with the eternal joys of heaven. It makes a man true in all his work. It made Paul and his associates adhere to the one theme of preaching a crucified but risen Christ, as the only hope for lost souls. Multitudes received it and were saved by it. But others had no faith in it; the love of the present world ruled in their hearts, and the desire for its acquisitions filled their vision, so hiding the greater and more glorious things of the gospel. God will have all the glory of salvation; hence the use of feeble men, earthen vessels. Their very weakness shows the divine efficiency. Paul suffered almost every kind of trial that can befall one in this life,—abuse, neglect, slander, persecution, hunger, shipwreck, bonds, imprisonment, stoning. Such constant peril of violent death was he in, that he carried death, as it were, about with him. But he calls them light afflictions, momentary, and keeps up a cheerful courage. Why? Faith in Christ made him see the grandeur of the rewards of heaven. This eternal weight of glory would be the issue of trials here endured for Christ's sake. “The light of Christ's promise in our hearts, the life of Christ's spirit in our souls, can make all trials easy, all burdens light; can cheer the darkest night with the glory of heaven and the songs of victory.”

L. M. God of the world, thy glories shine,
Through earth and heaven, with rays divine;
Thy smile gives beauty to the flower,
Thine anger to the tempest power.

God of eternal life, thy love
Doth every stain of sin remove;
The cross, the cross — its hallowed light
Shall drive from earth her cheerless night.

1 But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.

2 And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.

3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labor thither; for they are but few.

4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men; and they fled before the men of Ai.

5 And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

6 And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.

7 And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!

8 O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies!

9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?

10 And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?

11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.

12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

JOSHUA, vii. 1-12.

We cannot read such a passage without being deeply impressed with the thought that sin is a fearful thing. God hates it, and will punish the guilty one. Here one sinner dared to break God's express command, and the whole nation is made to suffer in consequence of it. In the face of such facts, who will dare to call sin a light matter, or hope to escape the just consequence of it? It was especially important that Israel should be profoundly impressed with the fact that it was God who was leading them, God who was going to give success, and that they could not have his help unless they gave a cheerful obedience to all his commands. Will God punish sin? Let the dead before Ai, and the flying host of Joshua, answer. The whole history of Israel is explicit in its teaching on this point. They could not question his retributive vengeance, for the warning monuments were all along the route in the wilderness. Nor will it do for us to simply fall on our faces and cry to God. We must up, and put away the sin, whatever it may be, and at whatever cost. God will allow no trifling in this matter. We are to cease doing evil, as well as learn to do well. Sin is the great destroyer of all our joys, the prolific cause of all our woes. "He that covereth his sin shall not prosper."

L. M. Wilt thou despise eternal fate,
Urged on by sin's delusive dreams?
Madly attempt the infernal gate,
And force thy passage to the flames?

Stay, sinner, on the gospel plains,
And hear the Lord of life unfold
The glories of his dying pains--
Forever telling, yet untold.

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.

7 When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth.

8 The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

9 A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

10 When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, there is shouting.

11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

12 He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbor: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

13 A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

21 Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

22 As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.

23 The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.

24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

26 He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that scleth it.

PROVERBS, xi. 5-13, 21-26.

Our selection may be regarded as a running commentary on the words of God to Isaiah, "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with them, for the reward of their hands shall be given them." Read with this thought in mind, it becomes a mine, a fountain of overflowing wisdom. Men are too apt to think that God does not trouble himself about human affairs; hence the thoughtlessness with which they go on in their wicked ways. His all-searching eyes are watching our actions. He ever knows the thoughts of men, and his divine justice will insure the well-being of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked as well. Often it does not appear to be so. But God never hurries. He can afford to take time, and in the end it always comes out ill with the sinner, but well with the righteous. "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small. Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all." Covetousness and a miserly spirit are abominations to God, and he who nourishes sin in his heart will be ruined by it. But justice and uprightness are pleasing to God, and faithfulness will be blessed of him.

L. M. Your streams were floating me along
Down to the gulf of dark despair;
And while I listened to your song,
Your streams had e'en conveyed me there.

Lord, I adore thy matchless grace,
That warned me of that dark abyss;
That drew me from those treacherous seas,
And bade me seek superior bliss.

Now to the shining realms above
I stretch my hands and glance my eyes;
O for the pinions of a dove,
To bear me to the upper skies!

There, from the bosom of my God,
Oceans of endless pleasure roll;
There would I fix my last abode,
And drown the sorrows of my soul.

1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

3 Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.

1 PETER, iii. 1-19.

All the relations of life have their peculiar duties. Peter speaks of the relations of wives and husbands. Many an unconverted man has been won to the service of Christ by the cheerful, consistent deportment of a Christian wife. Her words and acts are invitations to come to Jesus. Such wives will be much more particular to adorn the life with Christian graces than the body with jewelry. Very choice are the wise words of the apostle to husbands; and if such will honor their wives, remembering that they are equal heirs of grace, they will make the conjugal relation what it ought to be. As brethren, the law of love must be the rule, which will make them compassionate, pitiful, courteous, and will not only keep them from evil acts and unkind words, but will lead them to seek blessings for each other. The fear of the Lord should be far above all fear of men, as it will be the best antidote for fear of sufferings. If we fear God we shall not be likely to fear men. It should be the special study of every Christian to live with a conscience void of offense. Christ suffered, and it is enough for the disciple to be as his Lord. We are told here that Christ, through the Spirit, preached to those spirits now in prison, when they lived on earth in the days of Noah. This was done while the ark was preparing.

“s. Faint not, Christian! though within
There's a heart so prone to sin;
Christ, the Lord, is over all,
He'll not suffer thee to fall.”

Faint not, Christian! look on high;
See the harpers in the sky;
Patient wait, and thou wilt join,
Chant with them of love divine.

5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

6 And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What dost thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon

the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What dost thou here, Elijah?

14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15 And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria.

1 KINGS, xix. 5-15.

How true to the life are the biographies of the Bible! Do they show us a man's strength, they reveal also his weakness. Elijah on Mount Carmel, triumphing over the prophets of Baal, seems an impregnable tower of strength; but Elijah fleeing in the wilderness because of the threats of a wicked and powerless woman, seems the very figure of weakness itself. The hands that wrote these sketches must have been guided by God, or we should not have known of such weakness. How could we have believed him, "a man of like passions" with ourselves, if we had seen him only as he stood in fearless majesty in the hour of his triumph? After eminent success in the service of God we are in danger of taking importance to ourselves; then it is a mercy to be shown our weakness, that so we may be kept humble. It will not do for God to answer all our prayers in the way we would have him. In despondency Elijah prays for death. The man who was never to die, asks for death. God had something better for him and gave it him, and so really answered his prayer. How blessed that when we ask amiss, infinite wisdom and love gives us what is best for us instead! "If the Lord does not pay in silver, he will in gold: and if he does not pay in gold, he will in diamonds." God gave Elijah rest, refreshment, exercise, and encouragement. There were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed to Baal. So will he help us.

C. M. Whence do our mournful thoughts arise?

And where's our courage fled?
Has restless sin or raging hell
Struck all our comforts dead?

Have we forgot the Almighty name?

That formed the earth and sea?
And can an all-creating arm
Grow weary or decay?

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord.

13 And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rear-ward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did six days.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the

Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.

20 So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

21 And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

22 But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.

23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

JOSHUA, vi. 12-25.

Let us recall all these facts, and see if there was anything in what the people did which had any natural connection with the result. They strictly obeyed the word of God,—nothing more or less. It was enough; it proved their faith. “By faith the walls of Jericho fell;” yet it was not faith, but God who overthrew them. What, then, did faith do? It simply opened the way for God to use his power. So everywhere this is the office of faith. It can do no more; but this it can do. God always honors such trust. In the poor woman it touched the hem of Jesus' garment, and his power healed her; in Bartimeus it simply cried, “Jesus have mercy on me;” in the Syro-Phenician woman it accepted Jesus' statements, and wove them into a prevailing argument. Faith leads to humble obedience. Does God tell us to stand still and see his salvation? We must obey. Does he tell us to go out into every field of activity, and do our best to gather in his harvest? We are to obey. Does he say, Lie and suffer patiently on a sick couch? That is our duty; and so will his glory be secured, and our interests served. It may not be an easy lesson, but the best one for any man is, that simple, downright obedience will secure God's favor. So Israel found when Jericho's walls fell.

L. M. 'Tis by the faith of joys to come
We walk through deserts dark as night;
Till we arrive at heaven, our home,
Faith is our guide, and faith our light.

The want of sight she well supplies;
She makes the pearly gates appear,
Far into distant worlds she pries,
And brings eternal glories near

1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;

6 And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness;

7 And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;

14 Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

2 PETER, 1-14.

God has made great promises to the believer. What use shall be made of them? Manifestly Peter felt that such abundant grace, and such precious promises, constituted a reason for earnestness in the cultivation of all Christian excellence. United to Christ, and thus made a partaker of his divine nature, we are to grow up into him, who is our Head, into completeness. God aims at a symmetrical, perfect character in every child of his. The gardener trims so as to have branches on all sides. So God would develop all graces, that there may be no deformity, but beauty. Hence we are to add one grace after another. Alas, that so many forget this, and satisfy themselves by cultivating one grace! A tree with one limb fails to satisfy our sense of harmony, and a Christian with only one grace, however prominent, shocks our sense of an ideal character. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity, all are needful to the perfect man. "When you are adorned by these jewels, and just in proportion as you practise these heavenly virtues, will you come to know by clearest evidence your calling and election." God will be well pleased with you when he sees rich clusters of all these fruits of the Spirit maturing in your heart. Does God see these in us now? Is there the promise of an abundant harvest?

C. M. How blest are we with open face
To view thy glory, Lord,
And all thy image here to trace
Reflected in thy word!

O, teach us, as we look, to grow
In holiness and love,
That we may long to see and know
Thy glorious face above.

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory;

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the

heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS, ii. 1-16.

“Christ crucified” is the central doctrine of the Bible and of the Christian religion. Paul would have all his prayers, his preaching, and his life centered in this. He determined to go nowhere without Christ; to read nothing, say nothing, do nothing, only what centered in the Saviour. Is not Christ all in all in heaven and earth? And if so, Paul had a wide scope for thought and efforts. Take Christ out of the Bible, and it is a blank book; take him out of nature, and nothing is made. “Without him was not anything made that was made.” Take Christ crucified out of the gospel, and every soul is lost; take him out of heaven, and there is no redeemed one there; take him out of the universe, and all is chaos; for all power in heaven and earth is in his hands. Only when our eyes are divinely opened do we see Christ; and only when we see ourselves lost, do we feel our need of Christ crucified. No wonder innumerable hosts in heaven are singing, “Glory to the Lamb! Our sins are washed away in the blood of the Lamb!” Reader, do you “know Christ and him crucified”? Is he your Saviour? Can you say, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee”? Let us all now sing, —

8s & 7s. In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

10

When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo, it glows with peace and joy!

1 And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was

with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

GENESIS, xxxii. 1-12.

Jacob had just escaped from one danger, and now a greater one is before him. So troubles crowd our path in this world of sin. But to encourage him, God opened his eyes that he might see the angelic hosts who were attending him. Two companies there were: one before, another following. Thus the "angels of God encompass his people." "They encamp round about them that fear the Lord, and deliver them." Jacob was nearing his brother's possessions. He remembered his sin, and was afraid. "By an eternal law, misery stalks in transgression's road." Alarmed at the report which his messengers brought, Jacob prepared for the worst. Yet he did not rely on his prudence alone. He went to God in prayer. His words were few, but comprehensive. He called on God as having made a *covenant* with Abraham and Isaac. He urged the Lord's command, "Thou didst say, 'Return.'" He was obeying that word. He confessed that he was not worthy of the least mercy, yet thankfully owned God's goodness in all his blessings. He clinched all with the promise of God to him. What importunity! What holy logic! What eloquent pleading! God's promises are always our best pleas in prayer. It will always be well with the Christian who walks in the path of obedience, and can put his finger on a promise that covers his needs. God loves to have his promises in constant use.

C. M. Recorded by eternal love,
Each promise clearly shines;
Nor can the powers of hell remove
Those everlasting lines.

His word of grace is sure and strong
As that which built the skies;
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment; else the new piece that didst it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 And it came to pass, that he went through the cornfields on the sabbath-day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath-day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungered, he, and they that were with him?

26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high-priest, and did eat the shew-bread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28 Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. MARK, ii. 16-28.

Matthew was an exception to most of Christ's apostles in that he owned a house, and was able to provide a feast. It was doubtless some time after his own call, when feeling deeply anxious that his old associates might see Jesus and receive such a blessing as he had, that he invited them to come to this feast. Christ taught at this feast that grace is for those who are humbly conscious of their need; that those who realize they are sick apply to a physician. The disciples of John followed the ascetic habits of their master; but Christ's religion being the offspring of love, was more free and joyous. Christ would not attempt to infuse actual spiritual life into dull, worn-out ceremonies; it could not be confined by these,—it would burst them, as new wine old bottles. "Old things, old types, old ceremonies, old burdens, sacrifices, all are passed away; behold all things are become new." Christ inspired his disciples with courage and hope, dispelling all gloom by the thought of his own loving presence. It is by a cheerful piety that the world is to be brought to the church. The joy of the Lord is our strength. The Sabbath is not for superstitious forms, but for cheerful, thankful service of God, and acts of kindness and mercy to men.

L. M. Deep in the shades of gloomy death,
The almighty Captive prisoner lay;
The almighty Captive left the earth,
And rose to everlasting day.

Among a thousand harps and songs,
Jesus, the God, exalted reigns:
His sacred name fills all their tongues,
And echoes through the heavenly plains.

1 Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

2 Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evil-doers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

3 Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

4 *For* thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, *Like* as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for

the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.

5 As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.

6 Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted.

7 For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for a sin.

8 Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited.

9 And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

ISAIAH, xxxi. 1-9.

Israel vainly sought help from Egypt, instead of the Holy One. Telling them their mistake, the prophet assures them of deliverance, and predicts the reign of Messiah, who would protect and comfort them. What exquisite beauty of imagery, what pathos and peace breathe in these words! National and individual life have similar aspects and phases; and Israel, vainly seeking help, except in God, is a type of man seeking rest and peace elsewhere than in Jesus. Here is a picture of the conditions of human life. Storm and danger, thirst and languor, fatigue and weariness, express it. God made this earth to rejoice in sunshine; but man's sin causes it to be swept by storms and tempests. God would have man happy; but sin fills his life with fears and terrors. God would have us dwell in safety and peace; but we tear ourselves away from him, and are helpless in the midst of storms. God has provided an antidote for all human ills. There is a hiding-place from every storm. Clasped in the arms of Jesus, temptations assail us in vain. Standing on the Rock of Ages, we laugh at the floods. We are hungry and thirsty, and Jesus says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." The judgment-day dawns, but we hear only, "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

L. M. Jehovah reigns; his throne is high;
His robes are light and majesty;
His glory shines with beams so bright,
No mortal can sustain the sight.

His terrors keep the world in awe;
His justice guards his holy law;
His love reveals a smiling face;
His truth and promise seal the grace.

Through all his works his wisdom shines,
And baffles Satan's deep designs;
His power is sovereign to fulfil
The noblest counsels of his will.

And will this glorious Lord descend
To be my Father and my Friend?
Then let my songs with angels' join;
Heaven is secure if God be mine.

1 And God spake all these words, saying,
2 I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

8 Remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:

10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

12 Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

13 Thou shalt not kill.

14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15 Thou shalt not steal.

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

EXODUS, xx. 1-17.

What means Mount Sinai, its thunderings, its thick darkness, the voice of God speaking so plainly, so positively? If our hearts are right, in all this we see and hear "God is love." The *law* declares "God is love," and so does the *gospel*. Love uttered all these commands. The *gospel* tells us of God's way; but we should not have known sin, or that we are sinners, if the *law* had not laid its edicts upon us. The *law*, then, is our schoolmaster leading us to Christ, where we leave our guilt; and God's love is providing a wondrous deliverance from the curse of sin. The *law* is a part of the *gospel* plan. It would not be perfect without it. We cannot intelligently appreciate Calvary until we have stood before Sinai, and heard its thunderings in our souls. When we understand the guilt of our sin, we shall grasp more strongly the saving hand extended from Calvary's cross. We never want to be saved until we know we are lost. This the *law* tells us before it takes us to the Saviour. It is all of grace, then. God gives and demands pure love. How shall we render it? Only by our union in faith with Christ, he doing for us what we cannot do. "Christ is the end of the *law* for righteousness to every one that believeth." Grace leads us to Sinai to see and feel our guilt, then leads us to Calvary. What wondrous grace is this! Have we trembled at Sinai, and wept at the cross? Adore the grace of God.

C. M. How precious is the book divine,
By inspiration given!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine
To guide our souls to heaven.

It sweetly cheers our drooping hearts
In this dark vale of tears;
Life, light, and joy, it still imparts,
And quells our rising fears.

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

16 Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesying.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 THESSALONIANS, v. 1-23.

These Christians had misunderstood some of Christ's words and those of the apostle. Paul wrote to clear their minds. They were daily looking for Christ's second coming. Paul assures them that Christ will come the second time to judge the world. His coming will be very unexpected by the unbelieving, and will produce terror in their hearts; but to the children of the light and day his coming will be only joy. It will end their earthly sorrows; it will usher them into the eternal world of joy and praise. As Christian soldiers, who have to keep guard and face danger and death, we should have on the whole armor, especially the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of salvation. Obedience to these divine precepts would make a perfect life. What peace has he who never renders evil for evil! How symmetrical the life that tests all things, and clings only to the good! How gracious is he who ministers to the needy, and is patient under all provocations! How shall all this be secured? Paul tells us here, by communion with God in unceasing prayer and perpetual thanksgiving; by never quenching the Spirit, nor ever drowning his voice with earthly cares. If we would not quench the Spirit, we must seek to know his mind. Exercising a discriminating care, we shall follow his leading and ever obey his voice. So he will sanctify the whole body, and fill it with heavenly peace.

C. M. My hopes of heaven were firm and bright;
But since the precept came
With such convincing power and light,
I find how vile I am.

My guilt appeared but small before,
Till I with terror saw
How perfect, holy, just, and pure
Is thine eternal law.

1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?

3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

4 And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying,

What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

5 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?

EXODUS, xvii. 1-7.

How welcome to the Israelite was a cool stream of water issuing from that smitten rock, and flowing through the whole encampment! And especially as it came at the moment when they were dying with thirst. How clearly the hand of God could be seen in this supply! "That rock is Christ; that fissure is his wounded side; those streams are his abundant grace." The rock speaks and tells of Christ's strength. Nothing is too hard for him. Surging billows and raging storms stir not the rock; ages change it not. So Christ is unchangeable. His love nothing can change. He yearns to save. Satan does his worst; but Jesus lives. He is a rock: this rock can be trusted; the support is sure, the refuge safe. Moses smote the rock, and how the heavy blows fell on Christ! Sin, the law, justice, holiness, all smote him. Jesus gave "his back to the relentless vengeance, until by his stripes his people are all freed." He is smitten for them; they are smitten in him. The rock receives the blows, and the sheltered are unharmed. Take the cross out of the Bible, and nothing of value is left. See the water pouring from the rock! Those streams tell us of Christ. Healing streams flow from every wound. They supply a fountain which cleanses from sin, heals diseases, quenches thirst, gives life eternal. The wounds of Jesus are thus the Spirit's avenues; and as Horeb's streams ceased not, so nothing checks these living streams. There is enough for every one, and all is free. If we would be blessed, drink from these streams.

S. M. Lord, I would come to thee,
A sinner all defiled;
O, take the stain of guilt away,
And own me as thy child.

I cannot live in sin,
And feel a Saviour's love;
Thy blood can make my spirit clean,
And write my name above.

Among thy little flock
I need the Shepherd's care;
Pour waters from the smitten Rock,
And pastures green prepare.

Blest Shepherd, I am thine;
Still keep me in thy fear;
Now fill my heart with grace divine;
Bring thy salvation near.

20 That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

21 Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?

22 Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?

23 Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

24 By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

25 Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder?

26 To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man;

27 To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

28 Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

29 Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

30 The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.

31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

32 Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

33 Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

34 Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

35 Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

36 Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

JOB, xxxviii. 20-36.

Having overwhelmed Job with a sense of his ignorance and weakness, God challenges him to give him instruction and reproof. Job had longed to talk with God, feeling sure that his course would be approved. But when the Lord calls him to the discussion, he is almost speechless. He can simply say, "I am vile; I will cover my mouth." Shall we not learn that thus it will be at the Judgment? We are very ready with excuses for our sins here, and think we make out a clear case, as Job with his friends; but shall we use one of them on that day when God shall judge us? We know they are made excuses. Though we think to satisfy men, we shall have no thought of uttering these excuses to God. We shall be speechless then. What if Jesus does not advocate our cause then? Fearful thought! How wise it is to make the Judge our friend now, that he may intercede for us then! But Job was not sufficiently humbled, and so God probes him with other questions bearing on the same point, — revealing his majesty and dominion over the proud creation and mighty animals. God knows when men are sufficiently humbled. We are apt to take comfort too soon. We must make thorough work of our own repentance, if we would have everlasting comfort and peace. We must go down deep, get at the roots of sin, and then our repentance will be unto life.

C. M. My soul lies cleaving to the dust;
Lord, give me life divine;
From vain desires, and every lust,
Turn off these eyes of mine.

I need the influence of thy grace
To speed me in thy way,
Lest I should loiter in my race,
Or turn my feet astray.

Are not thy mercies sovereign still,
And thou a faithful God?
Wilt thou not grant me warmer zeal
To run the heavenly road?

Does not my heart thy precepts love,
And long to see thy face?
And yet how slow my spirits move
Without enlivening grace!

1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.

2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof.

3 And two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

8 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.

10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

11 Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?

12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches, which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?

13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

14 Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

ZECHARIAH, iv. 1-14

In this vision, Zechariah is shown a golden chandelier with a constant supply of oil, which is interpreted so as to give assurance of success to Zerubbabel. God's people were greatly disheartened; they were few in numbers, surrounded by a multitude of active and bitter enemies, and many obstacles were put in their way. Such a vision was very cheering. But they were deeply impressed with the thought that it was God's doing. Not by their own might or power were they to succeed. The certainty of success is repeated several times by strong words, by instructive symbols. No matter if the beginning was small, God would make it great; all opposition would be removed; though mountain-high, it should be levelled. We are not to be disheartened in undertaking great things for God. We may be poor and weak, but if God works with us we shall be sure of success. His providence and grace will furnish unlooked for supplies. Difficulties will vanish, and the work will be completed with great shoutings of joy. Evidently, the teaching of this highly interesting and instructive passage is applicable to all the spiritual efforts of the individual Christian and of the church collectively. Jesus is the great Master-builder; the plummet is in his hands, denoting his active use of it, and he will certainly carry forward his work: the spiritual temple will be completed and his wondering saints will admire, and shout, "Grace unto it!"

L. M. O, might I once mount up and see
The glories of th' eternal skies,
How vain a thing this world would be!
How empty all its fleeting joys!

31

Great All in All, eternal King,
Let me but view thy lovely face,
And all my powers shall bow and sing
Thine endless grandeur and thy grace.

6 Set thou a wicked man over him : and let Satan stand at his right hand.

7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned : and let his prayer become sin.

8 Let his days be few ; and let another take his office.

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg : let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath ; and let the strangers spoil his labor.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him : neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children.

13 Let his posterity be cut off ; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord ; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

15 Let them be before the Lord continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him : as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

PSALMS, cix. 6-20.

We have here the course and curse of Judas. He claimed to love the Saviour, and it is supposed was baptized by John the Baptist. Although Christ knew his character, yet he left him free to act as he desired. He entered the ministry, heard Christ's sermons, saw his miracles, and yet remained a hardened sinner. At last, acting just as he chose, he made a bargain, and sold Christ for about fifteen dollars. Then he said, "I have betrayed innocent blood." But his prayer was sin. He closed his earthly career by committing suicide. The panorama of his life and death, and the fearful curse entailed on his survivors, had all been clearly drawn by the unerring pen of inspiration. God, having decreed the freedom of the human will, did not, and I think could not, interfere with its unfettered exercise. Judas was as guilty as though God had been ignorant of his course ; and he has gone to his own place, having resisted all the means of grace. O what a lesson we learn from this psalm ! The Father may send his Son to die ; the Son may weep and agonize over lost men ; the Spirit may strive ; the Christian may warn and weep ; and yet the sinner go through it all down to perdition, and God at the Judgment, say, "What could I have done more ? I called, ye refused." Reader, stop now, and think. "Why will ye die ?" Your prayer may be sin very soon.

L. M.

He reigns ! the Lord the Saviour reigns !
Sing to his name in lofty strains ;
Let all the earth in songs rejoice,
And in his praise exalt their voice.
Deep are his counsels, and unknown ;
But grace and truth support his throne ;
Though gloomy clouds his way surround,
Justice is their eternal ground.

In robes of judgment, lo ! he comes,
Shakes the wide earth, and cleaves the tombs ;
Before him burns devouring fire ;
The mountains melt, the seas retire.
His enemies, with sore dismay,
Fly from the sight, and shun the day :
Then lift your heads, ye saints, on high,
And sing, for your redeption's nigh.

17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

18 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor:

19 And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

21 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

24 Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

25 And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

26 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

27 TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

DANIEL, v. 17-28.

The wise men had signally failed. But Daniel is called, and reads the doom of the wicked king. He deals faithfully with his royal hearer, and preaches him a brief but pointed sermon. He does not divine for pay, and does not want his gifts. Recalling to the king's mind the dealings of God with his father, he tells him that these things were intended for his instruction and warning. What mistakes we make by not profiting by the Lord's treatment of others! Instead of laying these things to heart, the king had even been more wicked. He had insulted God by wickedly profaning his sacred things. God will be clear when he judges, and justified when he speaks. And so, before his sentence is given, Daniel tells him of his sin. He had not taken warning; he had affronted God; he had failed to answer the end of his being; his doom follows. The words were but a transcription from God's book, where the deeds and the doom of every sinner are recorded. *Mene, Mene*, — God has numbered and finished thy kingdom. *Tekel*, — thou art weighed; thou art too light. God had put him into his unerring scales, and knew his weight. God judges no man till he has weighed him. He found this king wanting. So the kingdom was rent away from him. Dear reader, God has had you in his scales. He knows your weight. You may be sure, unless Jesus shall be with you, giving you the benefit of his merit, you will be found wanting also.

S. M. Waked by the trumpet's sound,
I from the grave must rise,
And see the Judge with glory crowned,
And see the flaming skies.

How shall I leave my tomb?
With triumph or regret? —
A fearful or a joyful doom,
A curse or blessing, meet?

1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are

pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14 Notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

PHILIPPIANS, iv. 1-14.

God has taken great pains to press upon us the conviction that our citizenship is in heaven. We are to tarry here only a little season. Hence, our whole life should be a preparation for our eternal home. Are we troubled about this vile body? Jesus is coming to transform it, so that it shall be like his glorious body. This assurance should fill us with joy. Many were the apostle's trials; but his glorious hope was a well-spring of joy, causing him to rejoice in the Lord always. Reader, have you trials? They need not take away your joy. If you have a hope, big with immortality and eternal life, you should be joyful in the midst of sorrows and discouragements. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice." Peace is the deep tranquillity of a soul which thankfully refers everything to God in prayer. The peace of a trusting heart passeth all understanding. It frees us from care and anxiety. Our Father knows all our needs, and has engaged to supply us. His resources will not fail, and he cannot afford to break his promises. With peace comes contentment, giving us a continual feast? Are the supplies abundant? They are from our Father's storehouse, and we use with grateful hearts. Are they scanty? His blessing on a little makes it as good for us as an abundance.

S. M. O God, my strength, my hope,
On thee I cast my care,
With humble confidence look up,
And know thou hearst prayer.

O for a godly fear,
A quick-discriminating eye,
That looks to thee when sin is near,
And sees the tempter fly;

A spirit still prepared,
And armed with jealous care,
Forever standing on its guard,
And watching unto prayer!
Lord, let me still abide,
Nor from my hope remove,
Till thou my patient spirit guide
To better worlds above.

2 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

4 And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses: and he said, Here am I.

5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7 And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8 And I am come down to deliver them

out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

EXODUS, iii. 2-12.

Moses turned aside to witness the strange sight; shall we not ask the meaning of this burning bush? The angel must be Jesus, since he is the great I AM. He, then, "who is the wonder of wonders, is the true wonder of the bush." Here is Jesus in his sufferings and resistless power. Jesus is the God-man, a union which marked him an all-sufficient Saviour. The word exhibits "the tender plant," "the root out of dry ground;" yet the voice says, "God is here." This flame tells of the sufferings of Jesus, whose earthly life was one burning flame of anguish. The bush was not consumed: Jesus was not destroyed. He conquered all foes; "he burst the bands of death; he shivered the grave's gates; he stood victorious on the ruins of hell's empire;" he triumphantly rose to heaven. Here also is a figure of his church. Persecution's fires have burned for centuries; but the church is not consumed. She thrives, buds, blossoms. God is with her: she cannot be destroyed. Jesus protects and preserves her. She is his bride, his jewel, "his peculiar treasure, the completeness of his mediatorial glory." Hence his ceaseless love, his constant care. If we would have peace in trials, triumph in death, heaven our eternal home, Christ must dwell by faith in our hearts.

11s. "Fear not; I am with thee; O, be not dismayed; I now am thy God, and will still give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

1 Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

2 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein.

3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, drank in them.

4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

5 In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

6 Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

7 The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

8 Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

9 Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

DANIEL, v. 1-9.

13 Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

14 I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.

DANIEL, v. 13, 14.

A fearful act of impiety is terribly rebuked, and a riotous, sacrilegious feast is suddenly terminated. It was a strange time for feasting, when a powerful enemy was besieging the city. This case illustrates a heathen proverb, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." Belshazzar affronts God, and God affrights him. When men will not be warned by God's judgments, they must expect to suffer from them. When men are inflamed with wine, they usually go to greater ends of wickedness. The devil always leads from bad to worse. What can be worse than profaning sacred things? Jesus tells us that "the sin against the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven." Suddenly the impious mockings, the foolish mirth, and the drunken revels, cease. Why? "That Divine hand, that wrote the law for God's people on stone tables, now wrote the doom of Belshazzar upon the wall." No noise, no threatenings, no thunder, no lightning, no destroying angel with a drawn sword,—only a handwriting on the wall. What a sudden change; and God's finger did it! What will it be when he makes bare his arm? God can make the stoutest sinner tremble, by turning his thoughts upon himself. How much better to think of our sins, and repent of them before God shows his hand. God's servants, like Daniel, can safely bide their time, for he knows when to bring them from obscurity, and how to honor them.

C. M. That awful day will surely come,
Th' appointed hour makes baste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.

Thou lovely Chief of all my joys,
Thou Sovereign of my heart,
How could I bear to hear thy voice
Pronounce the sound, "Depart!"

1 And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.

2 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount.

3 And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

5 And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.

6 And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that

will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

8 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

9 And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

11 Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee. EXODUS. xxxiv. 1-12.

Man will never know what he owes to supplicating lips. He laughs at praying men, and mocks their tears and sighs. But God hears and answers them. In our selection, a tree of glorious truth rears its high head, whose wide-spreading branches have been a refreshing shade to multitudes. Moses longs to see God's glory. God grants it. His glory is his goodness, and his goodness is his glory. His name displays all. With it, a train of glory fills all earth and heaven. He is *merciful*. God is a vast treasure-house of mercy, as the sea of drops, the sun of rays. Mercy is his bright crown-jewel. It shines above all his perfections. He is *gracious*. All grace abounds in him. Its cradle is God's heart, and its spring is his purpose. It drew salvation's plan, and consummates its scheme. He is *long-suffering*: and what need he has in dealing with rebellious man. His patience outlasts our offenses, and we live because he forbears. He abounds in *goodness* and *truth*. No danger of exhausting it, for his goodness is himself. Truth must die before he withdraws his hand of goodness. He has saved multitudes, but can save many more. This is the God who invites us unto covenant relations. Surely such mercy must not be despised, nor such grace rejected, or his long-suffering will end, and our long-suffering begin. Come to the God who so abounds in goodness, and see how truly his name proclaims his character. "This God is our God forever."

7s. Glorious in thy saints appear;
Plant thy heavenly kingdom here:
Light and life to all impart;
Shine on each believing heart.

And in every grace complete,
Make us, Lord, for glory meet;
Till we stand before thy sight,
Partners with the saints in light.

1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

HEBREWS, viii. 1-13.

We have every reason to trust the priestly work of Christ. He performs it in the true Holy of holies, that is, in heaven, in the very presence of God. He is the Mediator of a new covenant, a spiritual one. The old had not sufficient power over the heart; it could not cleanse from sin. "In believing hearts it nursed the expectation of the Messiah, and set forth the great doctrine of the atonement through the daily sacrifice, a type of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." But it failed to make those who depended on it perfect. Its blood was not cleansing blood. It was only a type of something better, something spiritual, even the offering of Jesus. When he had come and shed his blood, it was very proper that the old should vanish away. In the new covenant, God made provisions to have his laws written in the heart and conscience, so that they would be a living power in them. It is of this covenant that Jesus is the high-priest. We may trust in him. His work is perfect; his blood is efficacious; his grace completes its work. The believer is sanctified and fitted to dwell with Jesus in his heavenly home. This is God's only way of saving men. Will you not come to this priest for salvation?

7s & 8s. Hail to the Lord's anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!

He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free;
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

To him shall prayer unceasing,
And daily vows ascend;
His kingdom still increasing,—
A kingdom without end:

The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His name shall stand forever;
That name to us is Love.

1 Then said the high-priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

8 And he gave him the covenant of cir-

cumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

13 And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers,

16 And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sychem. ACTS, vii. 1-16.

Stephen was on trial for his life. Grave charges had been made against him, such as blasphemy against God's law, and his servant Moses. We have read a part of his response. His point is to show that God regards men, rather than places or law. It is the heart of the worshiper God looks at more than the temple or the form of the worship. His whole dealing with Abraham was to train him to be such a man as his position required. He gave him promises, but sorely tried his faith, so that he might stand out before the world possessed of such a character as the father of the faithful needed. It needed a long course of discipline and training to make a people ready for the promised land. So the believer needs much discipline to fit him to receive the richest tokens of God's grace. God's law and his chosen abode are indeed sacred to him; but it is because of the persons for whom they are provided. The temple would be no more to him than other places but for the men who are there trained for his service. Let us be careful not to attach too much importance to ceremonies and places. Remember that God asks the heart. It was no blasphemy to say that Jesus was greater than Moses, and that the temple service would give place to something that had more heart in it.

C. M. How precious is the book divine,
By inspiration given!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heaven.

32

This lamp, through all the tedious night
Of life, shall guide our way,
Till we behold the clearer light
Of an eternal day.

1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee.

11 Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.

12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

ISAIAH, lx. 1-13.

Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, when our Lord made his advent. Only here and there a devout Israelite was waiting on God. But in the fullness of time the long expected day dawned, the light of the world appeared; and what a change has come over the scene! Read over carefully these lines of the prophetic poet, and put your finger on a word not made true. Like Israel of old we can say, "There hath not a word failed; all has come to pass." Lift up your eyes: the sight is inspiring; innumerable Gentiles have come to the light; sons and daughters from far have been gathered; the abundance of the sea and the wealth of the nations are coming; while kings and queens have witnessed to her brightness, and ministered to her needs. No longer need of shutting the gates of Zion by night or by day. She is secure. Revivals do for churches what the centuries have been doing for the kingdom of Christ, on a larger and grander scale. When the glory of God is risen upon any community, how the darkness flees; how sons and daughters are gathered; how they flow together; how their hearts are enlarged; how the incense rises, and the treasures of earth are poured into her treasury! Strangers build her walls, and night and day the people wait on God. Men confess that there is a God in Israel.

8s & 7s. Jesus, hail! whose glory brightens

All above, and gives it worth;

Lord of life, thy smile enlightens,

Cheers, and charms, thy saints on earth:

When we think of love like thine,

Lord, we own it love divine.

King of glory, reign forever;

Thine an everlasting crown:

Nothing from thy love shall sever

Those whom thou hast made thine own;

Happy objects of thy grace,

Destined to behold thy face.

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that bad manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

5 And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

7 But into the second went the high-priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did

the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come a high-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh;

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

HEBREWS, ix. 3-14.

“Nothing more appropriate could be devised than the appliances of the Jewish worship; nothing more expressive than the symbolism of that worship; nothing more imposing than the ritual through which the Israelite made his offerings and uttered his devotions. And yet all this was vain without the consecration of the heart to God, and the living exercise of faith. As a mere form it became repugnant to God as a worship, and was utterly done away in Christ.” In themselves they had no power to give peace of conscience or access to God. The worshiper must have felt that his sins could not be atoned for by such blood; that a more costly sacrifice of richer blood was needed. Into the Divine presence only the high-priest could go, and he but once a year, after he had made sacrifice for himself. The people, even the priests, were shut out of that holy place. There was no access to God. Guilt lay as a heavy burden on man's soul. His conscience writhed under the torture of sin, and found no peace. But Christ's offering completely meets every want. His blood cleanses, and when the soul trusts him, conscience peacefully rests. His death tore down the veil, opened the way to heaven, and gives free access to God unto all who come pleading his blood as the only ground of their hope.

L. M. Jesus, thy blood, thy blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make us white as snow;
No Jewish types could cleanse us so.

While guilt disturbs and breaks our peace,
Nor flesh nor soul hath rest or ease;
Lord, let us hear thy pardoning voice,
And make these broken hearts rejoice.

2 Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

4 David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

6 Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

8 Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.

9 And David said to Abishai, Desist thou not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?

10 David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

11 The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them.

1 SAMUEL, xxvi. 2-12.

How little are the words of wicked, passionate men to be trusted! Only a little while before, Saul professed deep penitence for his persecution of David. His voice trembled, and the tears flowed, when he spoke of David's generosity, as compared with his unkindness. Surely unsanctified hearts soon lose the good impressions which their convictions have made upon them. Feelings, trembling words, tears even, are of little account unless they result in a radical change of conduct. When penitential tears crystallize into solid principles, by which the life is governed, they are valuable. Do not let tender feelings, accompanied by tears even, deceive you. Be not satisfied until grace has changed your heart, so that you love God and your enemies, and want to do them good rather than evil. How grandly David adhered to his loyal principles, and refused to anticipate God's providence! "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," says natural instinct. But Jesus said, "Love your enemies, and do good to them that despitefully use you." Leave vengeance with God. If you have needy enemies, clothe them, feed them, give them drink. Nothing is so powerful as goodness. Men may rebel against threats, but they will yield to unfeigned love.

C. M. O for that tenderness of heart
Which bows before the Lord,
Acknowledging how just thou art,
And trembling at thy word.

O for those humble, contrite tears,
Which from repentance flow;
That consciousness of guilt which fears
The long-suspected blow.

Saviour, to me, in pity, give
The sensible distress;
The pledge thou wilt at last receive,
And bid me die in peace:

Wilt from the dreadful day remove,
Before the evil come;
My spirit hide with saints above,—
My Lord, in the tomb.

9 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:

10 Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker:

11 And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

12 And there was there with us a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

13 And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

15 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it; and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying,

It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:

18 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat-fleshed and well-favored; and they fed in a meadow:

19 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor, and very ill-favored, and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness:

20 And the lean and the ill-favored kine did eat up the first seven fat kine:

21 And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill-favored, as at the beginning. So I awoke.

22 And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good:

23 And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them:

24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.

GENESIS, xli. 9-24.

The days of Joseph's imprisonment dragged slowly, and doubtless he thought justice tardy in its movements. But God's eyes were on his servant, and the time was surely coming to honor him. We wonder at God's delays, but should remember that his is the best time. He is preparing the best things for us. We shall acknowledge that all was wisely ordered. Had Joseph been released when the butler was, he might have gone home, and failed of preferment, and his people died during the famine. God's thoughts and counsels were infinitely above his. He knew when and how to use a king in delivering and honoring his servant. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water he turneth it." It would be no strange thing if in suffering you had thought yourself forgotten of God, as no answer to prayer comes. But patience is a most desirable grace, and such are excellent seasons for cultivating it. We are sure of being rewarded for patient suffering or waiting. God will turn the tide of ills at the right moment, and in unexpected ways make all grace abound toward those who trust him. One hour of heaven will more than compensate for a lifetime of suffering; but there we are to spend eternity. O, the honor, joy, and glory in reserve for patient waiting and cheerful serving!

C. M. Be still! and know that I am God;—

'Tis all I live to know;

To feel the virtue of thy blood,

And spread its praise below.

I wait, my vigor to renew,—

Thine image to retrieve:

The veil of outward things pass through,

And gasp in thee to live.

1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves

friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

LUKE, xvi. 1-17.

This is a commendation of prudence. Jesus instructs his disciples so to use earthly possessions that they shall become means to spiritual blessings. All Christ's words are like a jewel with many facets which catches light at many different angles. So use the riches of this world, by bestowing them on the poor and needy, that ye shall make to yourselves friends, who, when this world departs, shall welcome you to one which shall not fail. God repays in their name. Fidelity depends not on the amount intrusted, but on the sense of responsibility. He that feels this in little will feel it in much; and the opposite is just as true. "Minute events are the hinges on which magnificent results turn. In a watch, the smallest link, chain or ratchet, cog or crank, is as essential as the mainspring. If one falls out, the whole will stand still." Our Lord urges us to use wisely what we have been intrusted with here, to show that we are worthy to be intrusted with something of far greater value. How many are striving to serve two masters, seeking to carry the world in one hand and heavenly treasures in the other! Yet God says it is impossible. The Lord will make no investment in a man unless he can have a clear title to him and his whole service. Money is a good servant, but a bad master. Let us act as good stewards of God's property.

S. M. Help me to watch and pray,
And on thyself rely;
Assured, if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die.

Arm me with jealous care,
As in thy sight to live;
And O, thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give.

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

8 **Vanity of vanities**, saith the Preacher: all is vanity.

9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

11 The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

ECCLESIASTES vii. 1-14.

The whole duty of man, as well as his present and eternal happiness, is embraced in these few words, "Fear God, and keep his commandments." Not to be afraid of God, but to love and be unwilling to offend him. Solomon had tested wealth and earthly honor; he had all the pleasures this world could give him. Intellectually wiser than any other man, yet the unrest, the dissatisfied feeling remained in his heart. The conclusion of his whole experience was, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." This world cannot give what the deep God-like aspirations of the soul demand. He therefore recommends that every child and youth seek at once an experimental acquaintance with him, "without whom was not anything made that was made," —our dear Saviour. This should be done while the mind is vigorous and active, —before the infirmities of old age are upon us; while the sun is so bright, and the windows are all open; before the street-doors are shut. Come while the courage and confidence of youth are with you. Before the silver cord, that binds us so pleasantly to life's duties, shall be loosed. And finally, from the deeply solemn fact that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and render an account of our work, "with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," let us so live that we may hear the verdict "Well done, good and faithful servant."

I. M. Submissive to thy just decree,
We all shall soon from earth remove;
But when thou sendest, Lord, for me,
O let the messenger be love.

Whisper thy love into my heart;
Warn me of my approaching end;
And then I joyfully depart,
And then I to thy arms ascend.

23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?

24 And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

26 And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.

27 And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not the Lord spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, all ye people.

28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.

29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle.

30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel.

31 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him.

32 For it came to pass, that when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him.

33 And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot-man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.

34 And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died.

2 CHRON. xviii. 23-34.

Satan has great power to deceive, when God permits. One lying spirit can make four hundred lying prophets, and make use of them in deceiving Ahab. Satan becomes a murderer by being a liar, and destroys men by deceiving them. Plainly do these truths appear on the surface of this narrative. God is just in giving those up to strong delusions and believing lies, who will not receive the truth. His faithful servants, who persist in telling his truth, may have to eat the bread of affliction in dismal prisons: but they can well appeal to the conclusion of every case to justify them. Wicked men are not to be trusted. There is little doubt that Ahab plotted the destruction of Jehoshaphat in advising him to go in his royal robes, as he would be a conspicuous mark for the arrows of the foe. But God knows how to deliver his righteous servants out of trouble. Jehoshaphat did wrong to be in league with so wicked a man, and, but for God's favor, would have paid for it with his life. God may be trusted; he knows how to protect his chosen ones, and to destroy his enemies. None can hurt those whom God protects; and no one can shelter those whom he will destroy. Judah's king was safe in his robes; Ahab was killed in his armor.

C. M. Still gird thy sword upon thy thigh;
Ride with majestic sway;
Go forth, great Prince, triumphantly,
And make thy foes obey.

How deep the wounds thine arrows give!
They pierce the hardest heart;
Thy smiles of grace the slain revive,
And joy succeeds to smart.

And, when thy victories are complete,—
When all the chosen race
Shall round the throne of glory meet
To sing thy conquering grace,—

O, may my humble soul be found
Among that glorious throng;
And I with them thy praise will sound
In heaven's immortal song.

1 The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.

9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes,

who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.

11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

12 Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:

14 But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

8 JOHN, 1-14.

Our joy is enhanced if our spiritual children are true and faithful to Jesus. Then they become our epistles, our crown of rejoicing. John was the aged and only surviving apostle of the Lord. He felt a care for all believers, and called them his children, or, even more tenderly, his little children. Gaius gave many evidences of his discipleship, and was a source of affectionate joy to this apostle. Christian truth was not simply a creed with Gaius, but he had received it into his heart; had digested, assimilated it, and so he was sustained and built up by it. So must it be with us. "In us, truth must be a living force, an active energy, an indwelling reality, a part of the woof and warp of our being." When truth has taken such complete possession of our being, it will show itself in the life; others will see it and bear witness of it. "To walk in the truth, imports a life of integrity, holiness, and simplicity, — the natural products of those principles of truth which the gospel teaches, and which the Spirit of God enables us to receive." Believer in Christ, in your heart the truth ought to have free play, the largest room, the fullest activity. In no way can you so commend the gospel as by walking in the truth and showing its transforming power over the life. If your heart, and acts, and words be conformed to the will of Jesus Christ, your power for good will be almost boundless.

5s & 6s. The truth of our God

We boldly assert;
His love shed abroad,
And power in our heart,
Ye all may inherit,
On Jesus who call;
The gift of his Spirit
Is proffered to all.

33

His witness within
By faith we receive,
And, ransomed from sin,
In righteousness live,
Through Jesus's passion,
We gladly possess
A present salvation, —
A kingdom of peace

1 I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.

2 He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.

3 Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day.

4 My flesh and my skin hath made old; he hath broken my bones.

5 He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail.

6 He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.

7 He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy.

8 Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.

9 He hath enclosed my ways with hewn stone; he hath made my paths crooked.

10 He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places.

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate.

12 He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.

13 He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.

14 I was a derision to all my people; and their song all the day.

15 He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.

16 He hath also broken my teeth with gravel-stones, he hath covered me with ashes.

17 And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgat prosperity.

18 And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord:

19 Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall.

20 My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.

21 This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

22 It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

24 The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

LAMENTATIONS, iii. 1-24.

Jeremiah represents the afflictions of his people as something personal. In their sorrows, he sorrowed; what befell them, sorely afflicted him. What a wail of sorrow! Judgments came on God's people because they forsook him and turned to idols. Who can read those burning words, and not see a type of the sufferings and punishments which will come on the incorrigible sinner? What resources God has for afflicting any who refuse his offered grace! Who will dare abuse his goodness, and bring on himself such fearful woes? Dear reader, trample not on the mercies of God; he is now gracious, slow to anger; but when his wrath is kindled but a little, he will bring innumerable evils upon you. The remembrance of what his people were suffering humbled the prophet, and then memory brought another picture for him to look upon. "Like a two-edged sword, his memory first killed his pride with one edge, and then slew his despair with the other. Wisdom can readily transform memory into an angel of comfort. She may enrich her brow with a fillet of gold all spangled with stars." Jeremiah thought of God's mercies and compassions, new every morning; and the remembrance of his faithfulness filled him with hope. The Lord was his all-sufficient portion. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

C. M. Bereft of friends, beset with foes,
With dangers all around,
To thee I all my fears disclose;
In thee my help is found.

In every want, in every strait,
To thee alone I fly;
When other comforters depart,
Thou art forever nigh.

1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, at l the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so

long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

JOHN, xiv. 1-15.

Was ever such love as this? Recall the circumstances. It was the night before his own death. A world of sin was resting with mountain weight upon his soul. The sin was not his own, but he was to atone for it by pouring out his life-blood. Yet he forgot himself, and thought only of comforting his disciples. Strange, surprising love! In these words we have comfort for troubled hearts. Was it strange that they were troubled? Think of their situation. They had just been told of the treason of one, of the cruel denial of another; that they all would forsake him; and of the immediate departure of their beloved Lord. Then these words came with an immeasurable power of comfort and consolation. He assures them of a future dwelling with him in the many-mansioned home, that heaven is a place, and he is the way to that home. He was going away to make preparation, and then he would come and take them, and all his, to the Father's house. It was his desire that they should be with him. They had been surprised at his works; but if they would only believe, they should do greater works than he had done. "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." He assures them that they are not to be orphans, but are to be comforted by the coming and abiding of the Spirit, who would never leave them.

C. M. Sweet is the friendly voice which speaks
The words of life and peace;
That bids the penitent rejoice,
And sin and sorrow cease.

No healing balm on earth like this
Can cheer the contrite heart;
No flattering dreams of earthly bliss
Such pure delight impart.

Thou still art merciful and kind;
Thy mercy, Lord, reveal:
The broken heart thy grace can bind,
The wounded spirit heal.

Let thy bright presence, Lord, restore
True peace within my breast;
Conduct me in the path that leads
To everlasting rest.

1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which

came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

2 CORINTHIANS, xi. 1-17.

Paul felt great anxiety for these converts. They were his daily care. He bore them on his heart, in his thoughts, and made them the subject of continual prayer. They were his "epistles read and known of all men." He had undertaken to present them to Christ as a chaste bride to her husband, and he did not want them beguiled from their simple-hearted affection toward Christ. If their new teacher had another Saviour, Comforter, or a new and better gospel, he would say nothing. But it was not so. "They tell you that I am making a gain of you; so far from this being true, you did not even supply my actual necessities." The servant of Christ is entitled to all these things, and Paul insists upon it elsewhere; but he makes a strong point here against these selfish pretenders. We have great need to be on our guard. There are many false teachers abroad, who are seeking in all ways to turn away Christ's disciples from the simplicity of the gospel. We should listen to no one who would dethrone Christ, or deny the efficacy of his blood to cleanse from sin, or of faith in him as the one only Saviour. If Christ does not save us, there is no salvation. God has no other Son to give, no other way of saving sinners. Christ is the solid rock.

C. M. My life, my joy, my hope, I owe
To this amazing love;
Ten thousand thousand comforts here,
And nobler bliss above.

To thee my trembling spirit flies
With sin and grief oppressed;
Thy gentle voice dispels my fears,
And lulls my cares to rest.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his

sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

PHILIPPIANS, iii. 4-16.

These words were written by Paul, the aged. They are crowded with such wisdom as comes from long experience. How necessary to be on our guard against everything which would turn our thoughts away from Christ as our only hope! He would not have them trust in supposed good works. If these had been worth anything, he had as great reason as any to trust them. He had seen their worthlessness, and given them all up. He had such a view of Jesus, he wanted nothing else, only to know him. If he could only gain Christ, all beside would be worthless. The righteousness of the law was nothing compared to that spotless robe of Christ's righteousness which he had put on at the cost of suffering, even death. To attain to this high standard, he forgot all the things behind him. He could make but little progress if he looked back. Hence, like the racer, with his body bending forward, and his hands stretched out toward the prize, on which he fixed his eyes, he pressed onward. If we would make great attainments, we must keep our eyes heavenward, where Christ is, and press forward, no matter what obstacles are in the way; Satan will be sure to put enough of them before us. "Onward and upward" must be the motto of the Christian racer, if he would gain the peerless crown of life. Such a prize is worth all.

L. M. One only gift can justify
The boasting soul that knows his God;
When Jesus doth his blood apply,
I glory in his sprinkled blood.

The Lord my righteousness I praise,
I triumph in the love divine;
The wisdom, weal'h, and strength of grace
In Christ to endless ages mine.

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

JOHN, xv. 1-16.

Nowhere is the vital relation of Christ and his people more beautifully set forth than here. Here are rich clusters of truth, and the wisest have given this passage their best thoughts. Here is the union of Christ and believers,—so close that they are one. But the branches are in the vine: not so as to impart anything to it, but derive their life from it. The vine *gives*, but *receives* nothing. Much fruit is expected from the branches. God leaves no fruitless branches, no superfluous wood. The branches that bear fruit are carefully pruned, so as to get more. “The divine hand skillfully does this, by his word, by his providence, by his ordinances, by his spirit, by the severe winds that blow off the useless leaves; by whatever dealing he can accomplish this object.” As the branches have a vital union with the vine, and all derive life from one source, so there should be a mutual love between Christians. Christ’s love for them should be the type of their love for each other. Jesus loves us as the Father loved him,—with an everlasting, unchanging, unending, measureless love. In this love his people are to abide until its transforming power has changed them into his image. “I have called you friends” before the Father, before the angels, before all the heavenly host. To say of you, or of me, “That person is my friend,” — what an honor!

78. Vine of heaven, thy blood supplies
This blest cup of sacrifice;
Lord, thy wounds our healing give;
To thy cross we look, and live.

Day by day, with strength supplied
Through the life of Him who died;
Lord of life, O, let us be
Rooted, grafted, built on thee.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to

your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

ACTS, ii. 32-47.

Wondrously does the Spirit affect men. See Peter. Two months before he cruelly denied any knowledge of Jesus; but now he is the boldest of preachers, telling his hearers, "You are the ones who crucified him." *The Spirit can take away fear.* How soon the apostles begin to witness to the resurrection of Jesus! Here, in his first discourse, Peter speaks of it, and it became the theme of their sermons. It is the risen and ascended Christ, says the apostle, who pours out this great gift upon us. God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Most effectually did Peter wield the sword of the Spirit. One blow cuts through their prejudices; another lays bare their hearts as he tells them their wickedness; and the call to repent was a sharp thrust. Then came that question which has ever since been *the question of every soul awakened to the sense of its guilt and need*, "What shall I do? How can I be saved?" In his answer, Peter addresses the understanding, the feelings, the will. It was the answer of the Holy Spirit for all time—"Repent." Change your mind, your life, toward Christ; change your motive in living; turn your eyes from evil; set your heart upon serving Christ. Peter addressed a mixed multitude; some were moral, some devout, some depraved: but his one word to all was, "Repent."

6s, 8s, & 4s.

Proclaim the lofty praise
Of Him who once was slain,
But now is risen, through endless days
To live and reign:

He lives and reigns on high,
Who bought us with his blood,
Enthroned above the farthest sky,
Our Saviour God.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, for he was naked, and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

JOHN, xxi. 4-17.

They who labor all night at the oar of prayer will be sure to find Jesus near at the early dawn; and when he tells them where to put down their net, they will be certain of a large draught. Jesus knows full well also when to have a meal in readiness for his fainting or hungry laborers. How rich his entertainments are! How refreshing! Who can refuse an invitation to "come and dine" with Jesus? What strength does he get who dines with Christ! He will be equal to any service then, for he feeds on the very marrow and fatness of the gospel. Be sure to dine with Jesus whenever invited. "What so searching as love, so intense in its requirements, so severe in its tests, because so pure, so rich, so free in its outgoings?" The love which Jesus had for Peter cannot be measured by human standard. He did not question the right of Christ to lay the triple-hammer stroke of inquiry, "Lovest thou me?" on his heart. Yet it touched him deeply. Love to Jesus must always be the qualification for feeding the flock,—the test question to the believer, for duty or death must be "Lovest thou me?" Can we look in the face of Jesus and say, "Thou knowest that I love thee"?

P. M. Though unseen, I love the Saviour;
He hath brought salvation near;
Manifests his pardoning favor,
And when Jesus doth appear,
Soul and body
Shall his glorious image bear.

While the angel choirs are crying.
Glory to the great I AM,
I with them will still be crying—
Glory! glory to the Lamb!
O how precious
Is the sound of Jesus' name!

1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter

in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

JOHN, x. 1-16.

How often have we said, "If I could only *see* Jesus"! Here we have a picture of him. It was sketched by himself, and is true to life. It is in the guise of an Eastern shepherd. The sheep know his voice, and he knows their names. He goes before them, and they gladly follow him. We might be deceived, but the sheep are not, for they will not follow a stranger. He is the door to the fold, because by him only can we have access to the Father. Jesus, the great *I am*, is the entrance into the true church. He is the new and living way, which he himself has opened up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. He had eminent qualifications to be a shepherd, since he gives life to the sheep. They had forfeited and lost it, and he gives it back. Not meagerly, but in a princely and royal manner. He gives in abundance. The sheep need food, and he says, "They shall go in and out, and find pasture." It will be rich food, tender and delicious. They will find all in him which their souls need. The shepherd must sometimes risk his life for the sheep, and this Jesus did, even laying it down. What a shepherd! How blessed the flock tended by so careful a shepherd!

C. M. Thou art the way; to thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek,
Must seek him, Lord, through thee.

Thou art the truth; thy word alone
True wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst instruct the mind,
And purify the heart.

34

Thou art the life; the rending tomb
Proclaims thy conquering arm;
And those who put their trust in thee,
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the way, the truth, the life;
Grant us to know that way,
That truth to keep, that life to win,
Which lead to endless day.

1 Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew

that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. JOHN, xii. 1-16.

Again at Bethany. How our Lord loved that quiet home, where he found such perfect sympathy! It was a happy family. They were not unmindful of his needs, nor forgetful of his kindness. Busy Martha could only satisfy herself by usefully waiting upon her Lord. That part was well; Jesus wants service. Would you have been glad to have filled Martha's place? Fill it now. Waste no time in vain regrets. In the person of his needy disciples, Jesus may be served now. Lazarus sat at the table with him. Blessed privilege! Sitting at the table with Jesus, hearing his gracious words, enjoying his smiles, how truly blessed such a station! Well, our Lord has a table now. It would have been strange if Lazarus had not been at that table. Is it not strange if you are ever absent from the Lord's table now without good reason? Mary's lavish gift was accepted of Jesus as for his burial; and, in reply to the carping criticism of avarice, he predicts that it will be a lasting memorial of her. The odor of that offering has filled the earth with her praise. We may let Jesus vindicate us. Who is this that in triumph is riding? The king of the Jews. So the people believe, and are doing him kingly honors. King he was, though not as they thought. Is he the king of your heart, receiving its cheerful obedience and joyous homage?

C. M. Hosanna to our conquering King!
All hail, incarnate Love!
Ten thousand songs and glories wait
To crown thy head above.

Thy victories and thy deathless fame
Through all the world shall run,
And everlasting ages sing
The triumphs thou hast won.

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me. PHILIPPIANS, ii. 1-18.

Paul here presents Jesus as our example, and asks us to walk in his steps. Jesus had only lowly, self-denying thoughts, and desires for the good of others, and took the humble servant's place. He even went lower in his humiliation, and suffered death. He put off one robe of honor after another until naked; he was nailed to the cross. "Stand by that cross, and count the purple drops by which you were cleansed: see the thorn-crown; mark his scourged shoulders; see hands and feet given up to the rough iron, and his whole self to mocking and scorn. See the bitterness, the pangs, the grief, showing themselves in his outward frame." If anything will humble us, this must. So lost were we, nothing else would save us. Let us think of it, and we will bow low at Jesus' feet. The spirit of strife and pride will die at the cross. Here the murmuring spirit will be crucified, while love of the brotherhood will be born. By the self-denying, humiliating way of the cross, heaven will be gained, and here you will be taught how to work out your own salvation, relying on God, who works in you the willing and the doing. Go often to the cross if you would shine as a light in the world.

L. M. My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in thy word;
But in thy life the law appears,
Drawn out in living characters.

Such was thy truth, and such thy zeal,
Such deference to thy Father's will,
Such love and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe, and make them mine.

Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of thy prayer;
The desert thy temptations knew,
Thy conflict, and thy victory too.

Be thou my pattern; make me bear
More of thy gracious image here;
Then God, the Judge, shall own my name
Among the followers of the Lamb.

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will;

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and

honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

HEBREWS, ii. 1-12.

Glorious are the themes of the gospel; more glorious the person who wrought it. "To give efficacy to his grace, Jesus came in our nature; put himself in our place; entered into a personal experience of our temptations, sufferings, and sorrows; wrought out before us the perfection of a human character; made atonement for our sins; tasted death for us; and by his resurrection spoiled death of its terror and Satan of his power. Christ was as complete in his humanity as in his divinity." If he had not been a true man, he could not have been tempted as we are, nor could he be our example in suffering and temptation, nor have had any brotherly feeling toward us. His humanity ennobles us. If he had not been God, his death would not have atoned for our sins; his blood could not cleanse us: we should be hopeless wanderers in eternal darkness. But he was a proper man: he is the true God; and so he is our example in trials, a brother, full of tender sympathy. God, who saves us, who destroyed him that had the power of death, delivers the captives, making them free indeed. The salvation he offers we may have; yet we may lose it by a fatal neglect. There is no escape if we neglect this great salvation, great in its author, aim, and achievement.

L. M. What shall the dying sinner do,
Who seeks relief for all his woe?
Where shall the guilty sufferer find
A balm to soothe his anguished mind?

In vain we search, in vain we try,
Till Jesus brings his gospel nigh;
'Tis there we find a sure relief,
A soothing balm for inward grief.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

JOHN, xiv. 15-28.

Jesus loves to do royal things, such as are fitting for kings. He was going to die, but he was not going to give up his power to help and save men. How often our hearts are weighed down with anxieties and sorrows, distracted with cares, tortured with fears, and we sigh for comfort! We want a friend to confide in, a deliverer, a help, a refuge. Jesus anticipated it, and said, "I will not leave you comfortless." The Holy Spirit will come; a friend ever near, ever abiding in you. He comforts by using Christ's truth, by applying Christ's grace. He gives the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for heaviness. Do you want a friend? Jesus says, "I will love you." And "O, how he loves!" So tender, gracious, intimate, what other love can we want? If we trust him implicitly, and keep his words faithfully, he will shape us in the mould of his own divine life and spirit, and cover us with the graces of his inimitable love and beauty. "All in all in Thee I find." He says, "My peace I give unto you." And such peace! Peace of conscience; peace in the evidence of God's favor; peace in the freedom from worldly cares; peace in the assurance that all things shall work together for our good; peace in the certainty of Christ's coming to take us to himself. Where else can peace be found?

S. M. Blest Comforter divine,
Let rays of heavenly love
Amid our gloom and darkness shine,
And guide our souls above.

Turn us, with gentle voice,
From every sinful way,
And bid the mourning saint rejoice,
Though earthly joys decay.

By thine inspiring breath
Make every cloud of care,
And e'en the gloomy vale of death,
A smile of glory wear.

O, fill thou every heart
With love to all our race;
Great Comforter, to us impart
These blessings of thy grace.

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

42 Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth

on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me:

45 And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

JOHN, xii. 37-50.

How wicked is the sin of unbelief! Against what clear light, what bright manifestations of divine glory, it closes the heart! Jesus had wrought many and wonderful miracles. His teaching was plain, simple, clear, as truth always is. His words and acts had revealed a heart in deepest sympathy with human sorrow, and yet they believed not on him. How strange! The comments of the evangelist are true to the life, yet are not inconsistent with the freedom of the will. We should all read thoughtfully these last words of Jesus to the world. They are the summing up of his teaching. Believing on Christ is believing on the Father. Seeing him, was seeing God. He is the light of the world. There is no abiding darkness for the believer. Christ's mission was salvation, not condemnation. The rejecters of his words must meet them again at the judgment. By his words he will judge them. How awful the responsibility of resisting the truth! "Truth never dies: it lives in itself; in the memory it lives; it lives in the conscience; and the day will come when the truth shall put forth its judicial, its condemning power, against the soul that has rejected it. And the gospel of God's son shall be enthroned above the law of Sinai, to judge and condemn the world because of unbelief." There is life everlasting in these words of Jesus.

C. M. Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done!

Obedient faith, that waits on thee,
Thou never wilt reprove;
But thou wilt form thy Son in me,
And perfect me in love.

1 I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

2 I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

5 I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

PSALMS, cxlii. 1-7.

1 I will praise thee with my whole heart; before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord.

6 Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

PSALMS, cxviii. 1-8.

David is justly called the sweet singer of Israel. He went about his daily duties, with a song of praise on his lips, making melody in his heart to the Lord. God's loving-kindness and truth was an overflowing fountain of grace, giving occasions for a new song each hour. And is it not so with us? When we think of David, we may well blush that we sing of God's goodness so little. Let us praise him for his goodness to us. If we were to praise him for *one* in a *thousand* of our blessings, we should sing from morn to morn. David had many trials, but he says, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." Remembering the experience of Adullam's cave, he wrote this second part. His spirit was overwhelmed; snares everywhere; no man caring for his soul; but the Lord knew it all. The believer in God should not let trouble deaden his heart, or destroy its peace. God gives him what the world cannot take away, and in old age he will have the freshness and glow of youth. Trouble will not hinder his singing "in the ways of the Lord." He sings at the cross when the burden of sin goes; sings over past blessings; sings over new mercies each day. "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." Then sing, my soul, sing ye saints, make earth vocal with praise, and thus be ready to make all the heavenly arches ring with glad songs.

S. M. To all his praying saints
He ever will attend,
And to their sorrows and complaints
His ear in mercy bend.

Then blessed be the Lord,
Who has not turned away
His mercy, nor his precious word,
From those who love to pray.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers despise the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know

naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

JUDE, 5-15.

The Scriptures meet all our need for spiritual instruction. They show us the way of life and salvation, pointing out the strait and narrow way. They admonish, warn, reprove, and correct us, that we may not fail of eternal life. Among Christ's chosen twelve was one false-hearted traitor; and every organization has suffered by those who have been false to its interests. Jude here describes these guilty ones, and lifts a warning voice which should make every man thoughtful and careful, lest he has built on a sandy foundation a structure which the day of God's wrath will sweep to destruction. Thinking God is too good to punish his creatures, or that they are too good to be punished, they are reminded of the fall of pure angels from heaven, the destruction of the cities of the plain, and the old world. The destruction of those multitudes was a type of the eternal destruction of all who reject Christ. "They shall not enter into my rest." How faithfully are we instructed to build ourselves up in the faith, and keep ourselves in the love of God, by living in obedience to all Christ's commands, looking to Jesus for the needed help and eternal life.

7s. Sinner, rouse thee from thy sleep;
Wake, and o'er thy folly weep;
Raise thy spirit, dark and dead;
Jesus waits his light to shed.

Wake from sleep; arise from death;
See the bright and living path;
Watchful, tread that path; be wise;
Leave thy folly; seek the skies.

Leave thy folly; cease from crime;
From this hour redeem thy time;
Life secure without delay;
Evil is thy mortal day.

O, then, rouse thee from thy sleep,
Wake, and o'er thy folly weep;
Jesus calls from death and night;
Jesus waits to shed his light.

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard

cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

MATTHEW, xxi. 33-46.

Jesus seldom left his hearers in doubt of his meaning. Whether he taught by direct address, parable, or other illustrations, there was always a sharp point thrust into the heart which produced penitence and faith, or sent them away to seek his destruction. The figure of the vineyard was familiar to the Jews; they could easily see the point. How many prophets had been sent to Israel, receiving just such treatment as is here narrated! But God had one well-beloved Son. He will certainly be respected and obeyed, for he has authority. He sends him; and instead of being reverenced, he is cruelly slain. Surely Jesus expresses with the deepest pathos the greatness of that divine love which, when all other means of recovering men from rebellion were exhausted, did not shrink from this greatest possible gift. What unparalleled love was this! We must not forget that it was the Father's love which the Son revealed in his own. If anything can tell us that God carries his sinning, suffering creatures on his heart, and what he would do for each sin-burdened soul, the sending of Jesus declares it. The obstinacy and boldness of their rejection of that Son seems remarkable. But not more so than the course of multitudes who now do the same. Let us not forget these closing words, and what fearful doom awaits those who continue to oppose.

7s. Jesus calls us to the field!

He will lead us evermore;

'Neath his banner ne'er to yield,
Till the mighty conflict's o'er.

35

Then, in yonder world of light,
We will lay our armor down,
And, 'mid throngs of angels bright,
Each receive a starry crown.

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not.

MATTHEW, xxi. 17-30.

How many evidences of the true manhood of Jesus are scattered through these narratives! He hungered, he thirsted, he rejoiced, he wept. Who does not find himself drawn into closer sympathy with him for these things? The fact of leaves indicated the probability of fruit. What does the Lord find in us? He has a right to expect fruit; not only the fruits of the Spirit, but fruit gathered by active service for him. Is it nothing but leaves? Why should he allow us to cumber the ground? He will not long. The time cometh when his withering curse shall dry up every leaf. It is remarkable, that while our Lord symbolized his abundant mercies by numberless miracles for the good of men, he expressed the severity of his judgments on the disobedient and unfaithful by *one* sign, inflicted on a senseless tree. We need to pray and labor that we bear much fruit. His question about John placed his enemies in a dilemma which showed their folly. If they were unable or unwilling to decide whether John was a true prophet, they were clearly unfit to judge Christ. Practical Christianity is working for Christ, and we must see to it that we be *doers* as well as hearers. It is not enough to say, "I will." The Lord looks to *see* us in the vineyard, toiling and doing good service.

C. M. See how the fruitless fig-tree stands
Beneath the owner's frown;
The axe is lifted in his hands,
To cut the cumberer down.

"Year after year, I come," he cries,
"And still no fruit is shown;
I see but empty leaves arise;
Then cut the cumberer down."

1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

3 And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna

to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were sore displeased,

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

MATTHEW, xxi. 1-16.

Jesus was the child of prophecy, and nearly all his public acts were in fulfillment of some prophetic words. A strange blindness must be on the student of the Old Testament, who cannot see Jesus on almost every page. Zechariah tells us how we may know he is a king. Behold he cometh, meek, sitting on a colt, receiving the adorations of multitudes. Yet how peaceful his movements! No alarming trumpet, nor din of war. Salvation had come nigh, even unto Jerusalem; but she thrusts it away. Jesus comes as the Prince of Peace. He comes to offer everlasting peace; but he will not force it upon any one,—he will be king of willing subjects. He says, "Come," and he will give you peace, and joy everlasting. He stands at the door and knocks, ready to come in and spread a rich feast, which will forever feed a hungry soul. But the bolt is on your side of the door, and you must remove it if he comes in. How rich the blessing if you will open wide the door, and say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"! Believer, your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It ought to be a house of prayer. May Jesus not only live in us, but reign in and over us without a rival.

C. M. Blest be the Lord, who comes to men
With messages of grace;
Who comes, in God the Father's name,
To save our sinful race

Hosanna in the highest strains
The church on earth can raise!
The highest heavens, in which he reigns,
Shall give him nobler praise.

1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth: such a one caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth:

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such a one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revela-

tions, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

2 CORINTHIANS, xii. 1-12.

Boasting is poor business for a Christian. Yet Paul gloried in his infirmities, weakness, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses, for Christ's sake. Strange, Paul, that you should select these. Why did you do it? Because the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness. He had had wonderful visions, had heard unutterable things. The Lord would not have him elated thereby, and a thorn in the flesh was given him. It troubled him exceedingly. In answer to his repeated prayer came the assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and Paul accepted the substitute. This secured all other good. His favor is life; his loving-kindness is better than life. The Lord's strength is perfected, clearly manifested, in human weakness. Well, then, says Paul, "I will glory in my infirmities." Most Christians are satisfied if they attain a spirit of resignation under afflictions. Not so Paul; he gloried in them, for he thus became the dwelling-place of Christ's power, when he revealed his glory. What an attainment! How does Christ choose the weak things of this world to display his glory in them! Twelve uneducated men established and spread the gospel over the world. A few missionaries are making heathen wastes to blossom with heavenly fruits. Dear reader, are you mourning over weakness? Take courage, for you must be weak, for the Lord to work through you. God's grace will equal your every need. Suffer bravely, trust wholly, and the power of Christ will be manifested in you.

L. M. When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they served other gods.

3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

4 And I gave unto Isaac, Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

5 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out.

6 And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea.

7 And when they cried unto the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians,

and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.

9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you:

10 But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

11 And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.

JOSHUA, xxiv. 2-11.

Joshua was old, and felt that he must soon die. He longed to look once more upon the people, bind them in a covenant to God's service, and give them some dying counsels. He gathered them in Shechem, familiar to them all, where they had heard and responded to the blessings and curses of the law from mounts Ebal and Gerizim. He gave them a rehearsal of their history from its earliest date to that moment. God claimed to have called, blessed, and made them a nation. He had used various agents. He led them into Egypt, and brought them out with many signs and wonders. He destroyed their enemies, gave them success in war, and established them in peaceable possession of their land. Israel knew it well, and could not question the statements. What obligations they were under to render to him a most hearty, cheerful, willing obedience! Such a review of past mercies led them to feel a humble dependence on God, and they vowed obedience. Are we under less obligations to our God? Nay, we have far more, for we live in the full noontide blaze of the gospel dispensation. Every day of our life has been filled with the tokens of his love. There stands the cross, speaking more loudly than all other signs and wonders of his changeless love: and it will speak when stars are dumb, and wonders have ceased, telling us that we ought to return love for love.

S. M. 'Tis God, the Spirit, leads
In paths before unknown:
The work to be performed is ours;
The strength is all his own.

Supported by his grace,
We still pursue our way,
And hope at last to reach the prize,
Secure in endless day.

1 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

COLOSSIANS, ii. 1-15.

Christ is all to the believer. He is the full treasury to all God's precious things; we may go to him for all we need. We need no priest or angel to intercede for us. Christ says, "Come to me." All his fullness is at our disposal, that we may be complete in him. All his divine resources are subservient to our salvation, and all his attributes combine for our help. His immutability, infinite power and knowledge, are all united to secure our complete salvation. They are our covenanted inheritance. His love, stern justice, and great mercy are ours, and are used for us. He is ours. He swings the door of God's treasury wide open, and bids us take all we want: and the more we take and use wisely, the better he is pleased. "Freely ye have received, freely give." All these are ours in receiving Christ; they are his gifts. We merit nothing. "As the earth drinks in the rain, as the sea receives the streams, so we receive God's grace." If we have received him, we shall walk in him, and go from one grace to another. If we walk in him, and have our being in him, we have all and abound. If Christ is yours, care but little for anything else; let nothing beguile you. You are complete in him. Let him be the chief source of your faith, your joy, your life.

C. M. Almighty power, and equal skill,
Shine through the worlds abroad;
Our souls with vast amazement fill,
And speak the builder, God.

But still, the wonders of thy grace
Our warmer passions move;
Here we behold our Saviour's face,
And here adore his love.

4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name:

6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast.

7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

8 Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favor in thine eyes; for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.

9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased.

10 And Nabal answered David's servants,

and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master.

11 Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?

12 So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

13 And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff.

14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.

15 But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields.

1 SAMUEL, xxv. 4-15.

What need we have to pray, "God, lead us not into temptation"! David expected injuries from Saul, hence was on his guard, and kept his temper well. From Nabal he had a right to expect kindness, and when he received nothing but a churlish answer, his anger was aroused, and he was ready to take vengeance on this man. He was so enraged that he was about to destroy the whole family, the innocent with the guilty. Truly, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous." Can the man after God's own heart act so rashly, and speak so unadvisedly? Is this the man who has been so long in the school of affliction? Yes, even he. Then "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Nabal had been generously treated, and gives only an exasperating refusal. It was wrong to be angry. Surely we need to be kept from temptation. He only is a wise man who daily breathes the spirit of that prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." "The tempter knows how to combine circumstances, and so to adapt his wiles to the spiritual state of man, as at times to bring an unexpected and powerful temptation to bear upon him." Thus David was caught. So others have been snared. Guarding ourselves as best we can, we must still pray, "Lord, shield me in the day of trial, lest I fall."

S. M. Is this the kind return?

Are these the thanks we owe? —

Thus to abuse eternal love,

Whence all our blessings flow?

To what a stubborn frame

Has sin reduced our mind!

What strange, rebellious wretches we!

And God as strangely kind.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hastened, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

24 And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.

25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

26 Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

27 And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord.

28 I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling.

30 And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel;

31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

1 SAMUEL, xxv. 23-31.

Truly, "A virtuous wife is a crown to her husband, to protect as well as adorn, and will do him good, and not evil." Wisdom was better than weapons of war. Abigail's conduct is noteworthy. She was wise in acting quickly, for delay was dangerous. "All who desire conditions of peace must send when the enemy is yet a great way off." We should seek the forgiveness of our sins before the anger of God has been greatly provoked by our long delay. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and thou perish in the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." Abigail showed wisdom in seeking to atone for her husband's folly with a most generous present. The sacrifices made to God should be the best, the choicest of the flock. He forbade a blemished beast being used in sacrifice; only the sound and healthy would do. He will not accept us unless we give him the very best. He must have the whole heart, and will not be put off with less. She vows before David, and generously assumes all the blame for the ill-treatment of his young men, and rising into a prophetic strain, foretells his future greatness. David fears for his life, but she showed him God had bound it up in his bundle with himself, while his enemies should be slung away. Then David would be glad that he had not shed innocent blood, nor used the sword of vengeance himself. "A good wife is of the Lord," and many are the men who should thank God for such.

S. M. Turn, turn us, mighty God,
And mould our souls afresh;
Break, sovereign grace, these hearts of stone,
And give us hearts of flesh.

Let past ingratitudo
Provoke our weeping eyes;
And hourly, as new mercies fall,
Let hourly thanks arise.

1 And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi.

2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6 And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.

7 So David stayed his servants with these

words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.

8 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

9 And David said to Saul, Wherefore hast thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.

11 Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou hastest my soul to take it.

12 The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

1 SAM. xxiv. 1-12.

What a beautiful illustration we have in this portion of God's word, of the restraining power of grace. Saul, with murder in his heart, with a large number of his most valiant men, was seeking to put David to death. In this cave, asleep, he was entirely in David's hands. But David cut off the skirt of his robe, and said to his men, "Touch not the Lord's anointed." So pure religion teaches us to "love our enemies," "to do good to them that persecute us." "Vengeance is *mine*," saith the Lord, not ours. Saul was deeply moved and melted by David's kind treatment, saying it was so unlike the men of the world to let an enemy go. The course pursued by David in this instance should be imitated by all Christ's children. Render good for evil, love for hatred. This would convince the world of a divine reality in religion, and cause them to say, "The Lord is with you of a truth." Reader, is there a person in the world you would injure if you could? If any one has, like Saul, sought to injure you in person or property, can you, will you show him a kindness, instead of doing him an injury? Let us imitate Christ, who said, when dying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" or Stephen, "Lay not this sin to their charge."

L. M. Though in the paths of death I tread,
With gloomy horrors overspread,
My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord, art with me still:
Thy friendly rod shall give me aid,
And guide me through the dreadful shade.

38

Though in a bare and rugged way,
Through devious, lonely wilds I stray,
Thy presence shall my pains beguile;
The barren wilderness shall smile,
With sudden greens and herbage crowned,
And streams shall murmur all around.

1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father;

and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12 Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

JAMES, iii. 1-18.

Divine grace achieves its grandest triumph in man's heart when it secures self-control. Probably the most difficult lesson for the Christian is the right use of his tongue, and only grace can teach it. Rebuking a growing evil of persons becoming public teachers without suitable qualifications, James graphically portrays the abuses of the tongue. Who does not see in society and church the evils of an uncontrolled tongue? Who does not suffer therefrom? Who can measure the harm which arises from slander, scandal, profanity, and other evils proceeding from an abuse of the tongue? One match set Portland on fire. A few words from Peter the Hermit fired all Europe with the crusading spirit. A word from Napoleon involved all Europe in war. More than half the wars that have cursed man, and deluged the earth with blood, are chargeable to the tongue. Capable of such abuse, who can control it? Yet the tongue is the servant of the heart, and grace can master that, nothing else. When grace rules the heart, the waters will be sweet, the fruit delicious. Wisdom will pour forth her treasures through a consecrated tongue, and strife will die in her presence. David's prayer should be ours: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips."

J. M. So let our lips and lives express
The holy gospel we profess;
So let our works and virtues shine,
To prove the doctrine all divine.

Thus shall we best proclaim abroad
The honors of our Saviour, God,
When his salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above, when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having a high-priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

HEBREWS, x. 4-22.

The Holy Spirit states the truths of the gospel with marked plainness and positiveness. The blood of no beast can atone for man's sin. While an animal's blood satisfied for transgressions of the ceremonial and civil law, sins against the moral law were of too deep a dye to be washed out by anything but the blood of Jesus. The sacrifices of the Law were simply the shadow, the rough outline, of which the shedding of Jesus' blood was the true picture. The blood of a lamb expressed the humiliation, penitence, and self-condemnation of the offerer, and typified Christ's atonement as necessary to salvation. The repetition of the sacrifice showed its inability to remove guilt. But the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, from sin in the heart as well as in the life, hence needed no repetition. Christ's atonement was complete, final; nothing can be added, nothing can hinder its triumph over sin. The blood of the Lamb of God alone has efficacy to atone for human guilt. If we are redeemed, the blood of Jesus did it; if cleansed, it was in the crimson tide of Calvary. If not saved, be assured there is only one fountain where the stains of sin can be washed out. It is freely flowing. Let us turn from all else. Plunge beneath the crimson wave, and we shall come forth white as snow. Trust nothing but the blood of Jesus.

L. M. Lord, I believe thy precious blood—
Which, at the mercy-seat of God,
Forever doth for sinners plead—
For me, e'en for my soul, was shed.

Lord, I believe, were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

8 And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king.

5 And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces:

6 For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

7 Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the

gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

10 And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries:

11 Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey,

12 Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.

ESTHER, viii. 3-12.

God never does anything by halves. He perfects all his undertakings. His foreseeing providence brought Esther to the throne at the opportune moment. He gave her wisdom and favor in the king's sight, and used her prayers and tears to save his and her people. She was richly rewarded by the confiscated estate of Haman, and Mordecai was made her steward over the property of his wicked rival. Truly, "The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." Esther's conduct should teach us that we are not to be easy when evils threaten the church of Christ. She poured out her tears and prayers for the deliverance of her people. Tears and tenderness are Christ-like. He wept over a doomed city, over the desolations of sin. Esther wept that her people, and God's people, were exposed to such fearful destruction. Sin is in the world now, working the ruin of untold multitudes, and threatening the church with great evils. Where are our tears? How feeble our prayers! Esther, though humble and tender, was intensely earnest. Shall we be less so, when the evil threatened is eternal in its duration? If the entreaties of the queen led the king to save her people, how should we be encouraged to cry unto the Lord that he will avert the evils threatened against the church. He will hear the cry of his people, and reward by turning aside every weapon aimed against Zion.

6s & 4s. O Father, in that hour,
When earth all helping power
Shall disavow;
When spear, and shield, and crown,
In faintness are cast down,
Sustain us, thou!

By Him who bowed to take
The death-cup for our sake,
The thorn, the rod;
From whom the last dismay
Was not to pass away,
Aid us, O God!

15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

23 All things are lawful for me, but all

things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience' sake:

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatso ever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience' sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 CORINTHIANS, x. 15-31.

The substance of what Paul has here said is given in the last verse. The sun is the centre of the solar system, and all move about him. God's glory should be the central thought of all our thinking, speaking, acting. When this is the case, all will be harmony and peace. This must refer to the little things as well as the great ones. Not simply the great planets, but every little star has its movements regulated by the sun. So in our lives, in *every* act we should seek God's glory. For as the planets are few compared to the numberless stars, so the great events of our lives are very few compared with the minutiae of every-day life. We are apt to forget this, and feel that the little things are not worthy of our Father's notice. "Live wholly for me." God would have every day a feast-day by our glorifying him in all things. This is a great honor to us. God does not put us into some inferior place, and give us low work; but he bids us do such work as the highest archangel does—show forth his glory in all our acts, great and small. His grace will be equal to all our needs. Ever looking thus to God, a perpetual communion will be established between him and our souls. This will invest us with a divine life. What a privilege! "In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths."

C. M. The gift which he on one bestows,
We all delight to prove;
The grace through every vessel flows,
In purest streams of love.

E'en now we think and speak the same,
And cordially agree,
United all through Jesus' name,
In perfect harmony

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

8 And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

9 So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed:

10 Who also honored us with many honors; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary.

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.

12 And landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days.

13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:

14 Where we found brethren, and were desirous to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed no'ning against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

ACTS, xxviii. 3-17.

When Paul met these warm-hearted brethren from Rome, "he thanked God and took courage." Have we anything to thank God for? Let us look about us. Do we not thank God for the Bible; for Jesus; for the Holy Comforter? O what courage even the chief of sinners can take from these "unspeakable gifts" of our heavenly Father! Paul thanked God for these Christians from Rome. Can we not thank him for praying parents, for a faithful pastor, perhaps for a praying husband? Can we not thank God for some severe trial which has led us nearer to God? A severe storm drove Paul and these men to Melita. So we see that "stormy winds fulfill God's counsel." God rides upon the wings of the wind for the salvation of men. A small band of Christians was found at Puteoli. So Christians are by the divine command stationed as God's light-houses, "all along the shore." They should be revolving lights—"Lights moving about among men." "Let your light so shine that others, seeing your good works, may glorify God." Can we not go forth from these devotions to thank God for many things, and take courage?

L. M. The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care;
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye;
My noonday walks he shall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountain pant,
To fertile vales and dewy meads
My weary, wandering steps he leads,
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,
Amid the verdant landscape flow.

1 I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

4 Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies,

5 Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

13 Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me.

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

PSALMS, XI. 1-15.

Several very important truths are brought out in this psalm. One is, that our condition out of Christ is a sad and grievous one, — so fearful, that it requires the united action of the three persons in the God-head to deliver any one from this horrible pit: the Spirit to convict, Christ to atone, and the Father to receive the soul washed in the blood of his Son. Our hearts should always be singing the doxology in view of this great deliverance. This salvation is a free gift. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life.” Is this new song in our mouths? Such a hope as this should never be hid, but proclaimed to the world. David says, “I have not hid thy righteousness in my heart.” He had made it known to the great congregation. So every Christian should put his light on a candlestick. He wanted all who loved God’s law, continually to say, “The Lord be magnified.” To those who say to the Christian, “Aha, aha,” (so would we have it) when they see them in trouble, David says, “Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame.” Terrible punishment awaits the finally impenitent. “Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.”

C. M. Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,
We wretched sinners lay,
Without one cheerful beam of hope,
Or spark of glimmering day.

With pitying eyes the Prince of grace
Beheld our helpless grief;
He saw, and — O, amazing love! —
He ran to our relief.

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that

thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

LUKE, xvi. 19-31.

We have here the prayer of the rich man, and the answer of Abraham. The only authority we have to pray to the departed saints comes from the dark world. Father Abraham, have mercy on me; I am one of your descendants; I am a Jew; I see that beggar that died at my gate is with you; send him with a drop of water, I am tormented; I am not annihilated, I am deeply conscious: let my brothers be warned, if I can have no relief. He hated the Bible, and wanted one to rise from the dead and warn his brothers. O how terrible to be the eternal enemy of God and his word! "Son, remember;" no unkind feeling in heaven toward the lost in perdition; no one can enjoy religion and feel hard toward even the wicked. Memory will be active in heaven and hell. Justification through Jesus removes the sting of sin. The Christian in heaven, deserving a thousand hells, with the poison and sting of sin removed, remembers distinctly all the past, yet is perfectly happy. But the sting and poison of sin remaining, constitutes the deathless worm. The worm and fire are not natives of hell; both are in the bosom now. Christ alone can extinguish the one, and pluck out the other. There can be no hell with Christ's blood applied to the soul, and no heaven without it. As the Father has no blood, and the Spirit has no blood, the unconverted must find Christ, or perish.

C. P. M. Awaked by Sinai's awful sound,
My soul in guilt and thrall I found,
And knew not where to go:
O'erwhelmed in sin, with anguish slain,
The sinner must be born again,
Or sink in endless woe.

Amazed I stood, but could not tell
Which way to shun the gates of hell,
For death and hell drew near:
I strove, indeed, but strove in vain;
"The sinner must be born again,"
Still sounded in my ear.

1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day:

and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works.

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

2 TIMOTHY, iv. 1-16.

As we linger about a dying friend with a tender interest, to catch his last words, so must we read these words of the apostle, who felt that "his departure was at hand." In those precious moments left him he forgets himself, thinks only of the glorious gospel, and exhorts Timothy to be faithful to that. It was a dying charge, full of instruction. Martyrdom was before him; but Paul was so lifted up by the ecstasy of faith, that he saw his Lord coming to bless him with heaven's rewards rather than the tortures of death. His confidence was not self-boasting. He had kept the faith, and the faith had kept him through conflicts and perils, and he *knew* that it would make him "more than conqueror" over death. He was sure that a crown awaited him, — one made for him that would fit no other head. It was a crown of righteousness which Christ would give him (not one he merited); and his joy was enhanced by the thought that such a crown was laid up for every believer. His magnanimous love made him want to share his victory and crown with every lover of Jesus. Yes, doubting soul, there is a crown made purposely for *you*; no one else could wear it. If you have believed on the Lord Jesus, have repented of sin, have been renewed in heart, in the heavenly kingdom there is a mansion, robe, crown, harp, and palm expressly made and reserved for you.

L. M.

"Go, preach my gospel," saith the Lord;
"Bid the whole earth my grace receive;
He shall be saved that trusts my word,
And he condemned who'll not believe.

"I'll make your great commission known;
And ye shall prove my gospel true,
By all the works that I have done,
By all the wonders ye shall do."

5 And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

6 And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

7 And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem.

8 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?

9 And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.

10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

11 And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.

12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth.

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manassch was the first-born.

15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

GENESIS, xlvi. 5-16.

The distinguished position of Joseph was well calculated to overcome his patriotic feeling, and lead him to look to Egypt for all future honor and reward. His father's recital of God's promise was well calculated to overcome any such feeling, if it existed. We are to cling to God's people, remembering that all good gifts, wherever received, come from him. It was a wise act to bring his sons for a blessing from Jacob. They were far more likely to expect honor and promotion by identifying themselves with their mother's people, than with Israel. The words of Jacob, his adoption of them, and his solemn blessing, must have made a permanent impression. They were forever united to his people. The blessing of the younger before the first-born should teach us that grace does not observe the order of nature in its preferments. God often gives the greatest blessings to those whom we think least likely to receive them, and he gives more to some than to others, for wise reasons. He bestows according to knowledge. Honor, wealth, or fame seldom lead to more humble trust in God, but they should, since he gives them all. Gratitude should lead all such to humility and submission. Suffering with God's people is far better than earthly riches or fame. God's blessing on a little will do you more good than great wealth or honor without it.

C M. To this dear covenant of thy word
I set my worthless name;
I seal the promise to my Lord,
And make my humble claim.

I call that legacy my own . . .
Which Jesus did bequeath;
'Twas purchased with a dying groan,
And ratified in death.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earring nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God

hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him. GENESIS, xlv. 3-15.

What a touching incident is this? Who can read this sweet story of recognition and reconciliation, without the eyes flooding with tears of joy? We see magnanimity triumphing over meanness; generosity requiting envy and malice; the man who had become so great in wisdom and power, showing himself greater still in love. But above all, we see the spirit of piety honoring God in all the events of life, and dictating forgiveness toward men for injuries which God had turned to blessings. "All things seemed to work against Joseph,—hatred, slavery, imprisonment: and yet all things were not only working for his good, but that of his whole family. Who would not trust and magnify the Lord, who holds all the complicated threads of life in the guiding hand of love? In this touching story, we seem to have passed over centuries to gospel times, there is so much of its sweet spirit in it all. God's love in man's heart is always the same in effects. We are reminded of some of the wondrous feasts Christ's people have with him, when the world is shut out. It was hard for Joseph's brethren to understand such forgiving love as he manifested, as it is hard for the forgiven sinner to understand Christ's love for him. Joseph fully forgave, and recognized God's overruling providence, bringing good out of evil. In this he was a type of Jesus, who forgave his murderers so freely. How touching is the kiss of forgiving love! Can we forgive as freely?

L. M. Like floods the angry nations rise,
And aim their rage against the skies;
Vain floods, that aim their rage so high;
At his rebuke, the billows die.

Forever shall his throne endure;
His promise stands forever sure;
And everlasting holiness
Becomes the dwellings of his grace.

1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

JOHN, iii. 1-17.

We have just read of a master in Israel who did not understand the nature nor importance of regeneration, or the new birth. How many since the day of Nicodemus have stumbled at the same thing! They think, and even say, if they are moral and upright, and treat their fellow-men fairly, that will do. But Jesus says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," whether he be good or bad, moral or immoral. How important, then, that we experience this change! Nothing can be a substitute for it. It is not a change of purpose, nor a change in our manner of life; but a change in the affections, in the heart. So that we can say, "Old things have passed away, and all things have become new." God cannot make us happy without this change. Let us take our dead hearts to Jesus at once to be made alive. Let us hold up Christ, then, as "the way, the truth, and the life." The Spirit, like the wind, moves on the heart; we see the effect, but cannot understand how his great work is done. May we all be able to say soon, "One thing I know: whereas I was blind, now I see."

S. M. Come, Holy Spirit, come;

Let thy bright beams arise;

Dispel the sorrow from our minds,
The darkness from our eyes.

Convince us all of sin;

Then lead to Jesus' blood,

And to our wondering view reveal
The mercies of our God.

"Tis thine to cleanse the heart,

To sanctify the soul,

To pour fresh life in every part,
And new-create the whole.

Dwell, Spirit, in our hearts:

Our minds from bondage free;

Then shall we know, and praise, and love
The Father, Son, and Thee.

1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never

wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

JOHN, xiii. 1-16.

O, the love that Jesus shows! Who can estimate it? We can measure the heavens, and weigh the mountains, but we cannot measure nor weigh the love of Christ for us. He has loved us long, loved us well, loved us ever, and will love us to the end. Not a word that he spoke, not a work that he did, but manifested his love, and then bequeathed it as a precious legacy to his followers. This was his last evening with his chosen ones before his passion. While the disciples were wrangling over the question of pre-eminence, Jesus took the servant's place. What self-humiliation in this act! There was no word of reproach. He patiently bore with their weakness, and gave them a significant token of his love. Could they forget the act? John never did. What lessons for us! This was no sacrament to be perpetuated. He simply meant to teach them the lesson of self-humiliation. His followers must be willing to perform any service that would tend to the sanctification of their brethren. Jesus came to minister, not to be ministered unto; and the Christian life is ever a ministry. What Jesus did for them, he is ever doing for us. He readily forgives our sins, accepts our service, feels our sorrows, bears with our follies, and washes away our multiplied transgressions. If he wash us not, we have no part with him. Have you any part with him?

C. M. Dear Lord, while we, adoring, pay
Our humble thanks to thee,
May every heart with rapture say,
"The Saviour died for me."

O, may the sweet, the blissful theme
Fill every heart and tongue,
Till strangers love thy charming name,
And join the sacred song.

20 And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast:

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. *JOHN, xii. 20-35.*

When we can say we would give up everything to find Jesus, we shall find him. If we have come to that point, Christ will not keep us long waiting to see him. The pathway to true glory is not strewed with flowers. It is a way of suffering. It leads through the valley of humiliation. The shadow of death falls on it. "Death is the unfolding of the germ for a new life, the expanding of the seed into the fruitful blade." Many flowers exhale their sweetest fragrance when crushed. Christ's death was the life of the world. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The cross of Christ is the true magnet of human hearts. "The death of Jesus, in all its significance, revealed in the light, and borne in upon the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, has a wonderful attraction, has drawn hearts from all races and classes; breaking down all opposition, has united them in adoring subjection and love to him." This it has done for others; but how is it with us? Have we all been drawn by Jesus to himself, away from our sins, into sweet and blessed communion with him? Are we resting in him, and expecting to live in his home forever? But if not, are we resisting the attracting power of the cross? "Dear Saviour, draw reluctant hearts," and make us all one in thee.

8s & 7s. Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shalt be:
And whilst thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate and friends disown me;
Show thy face, and all is bright.

Man may trouble and distress me;
"Twill but drive me to thy breast:
Life with trials hard may press me;
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest:
O, 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While thy love is left to me;
O, 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with thee.

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:

21 (For those priests were made without an oath: but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek:).

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such a high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high-priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

HEBREWS, vii. 15-28.

The apostle is showing the superiority of Jesus to the Mosaic priests. He is superior because he has an endless life. The law was only introductory to a better hope; it offered no salvation. The priests of the law were not installed with an oath, but the new covenant was so much better, that its one ever-living priest was confirmed in his office with an oath. Since Jesus "ever liveth," he is able and will completely save in every age all who come unto God, by him. He has every priestly qualification. He is separate from sinners; free from all taint of sin; removed from all contact with it; exalted to the right hand of God; having no sacrifice to offer, since he once shed his own blood for the sins of the people. This is the great High Priest of the gospel. He is able to save perfectly, for he ever lives, clothed with all power, and animated by the same love that led him to die. He is ever interceding for us. He gives us his spirit, overcomes our fears, and binds us to himself with indissoluble bonds. Yet this is but the beginning. He is able to do vastly more. He can overcome all our weakness, remove every barrier, and present us faultless before the throne. He asks us to trust and love him. Away with fear. Give him your whole heart, and you shall reign forever with him.

C. M. With joy we meditate the grace
Of our High Priest above:
His heart is full of tenderness;
His bosom glows with love.

Touched with a sympathy within,
He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations mean,
For he has felt the same.

He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears,
And in his measure feels afresh
What every member bears.

Then let our humble faith address
His mercy and his power;
We shall obtain delivering grace
In each distressing hour.

1 For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; as I wrote afore in few words;

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In which we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

EPHESIANS, iii. 1-19.

Though Paul had many trials, yet he rejoiced in the privilege of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, thankful for grace to unfold the hidden truths of redemption. Success, instead of filling him with pride, laid him in the dust. He uttered no word, preached no sermon, wrote no letter, except to glorify Christ. He longed to have all converts live to the same purpose; hence he labored for language adequate to express his meaning, and linked the blessings of the gospel in a golden chain. He would have God manifest his inexhaustible grace in giving them the power of the Holy Spirit, so that they might retain Christ in their hearts: Christ dwelling in them would confirm them in his love, and they would be able to comprehend the nature and the fullness of that love; thus would they come unto all the fullness of God. This should induce us to live for Christ wholly. This fullness opens to us the treasury of his unsearchable riches. We may have his love, which in its sweetness, fullness, greatness, faithfulness, passes human knowledge. There is no love like his; and he will withhold no good thing from those he loves.

7s & 6s. O Lord, thy love's unbounded!

So full, so sweet, so free!

Our thoughts are all confounded,

Whene'er we think on thee:

For us thou cam'st from heaven,

For us to bleed and die;

That, purchased and forgiven,

We might ascend on high.

O, let this love constrain us

To give our hearts to thee;

Let nothing henceforth pain us,

But that which paineth thee!

Our joy, our one endeavor,

Through suffering, conflict, shame,

To serve thee, gracious Saviour,

And magnify thy name.

7 Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

8 Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate inheritances;

9 That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

10 They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

12 Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

ISAIAH, xlix. 7-12.

18 Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth.

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

20 The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

21 Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?

ISAIAH, xl ix. 18-21.

Israel was a type of the church, which often becomes discouraged, and pines and complains as though God had forgotten to be gracious. Yet Jesus has been given as a covenant of the people, and he is the sum and substance of all God's engagements with his church. What is true of the church, is true of the believer; what is true of the whole body, is true of the members. Are we in captivity, sitting by the cold stream, our harp hung on the willow, no song on our lips, no joy in our hearts; and are we thinking that God hath forgotten us? Read these words: God has given Jesus as a covenant to us. We have in Jesus all the fullness of the God-head. He is the infinite God, and was the perfect man, and all that he has is ours. He is ours to strengthen and help. There is not a particle of love in his heart which is not ours. He is an ocean of love, and we may plunge into it, and say, It is mine. God forsaken us! Can a mother forget her child? It may be: strange, but true. Yet God will not forget us. He cannot; for he has graven our names on the palms of his hands. Not our names simply, but ourselves; "our image, person, circumstances, sins, temptations, wants, all that concerns us, are graven there." Can God forget us when he thus sees us constantly?

7s & 6s. In heavenly love abiding,
No change my heart shall fear,
And safe is such confiding,
For nothing changes here:
The storm may roar without me,
My heart may low be laid,
But God is round about me,
And can I be dismayed?

28

Green pastures are before me,
Which yet I have not seen;
Bright skies will soon be o'er me,
Where darkest clouds have been;
My hope I cannot measure;
My path to life is free;
My Saviour has my treasure,
And he will walk with me.

10 So the posts passed from city to city, through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless, divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

12 Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord.

13 And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation.

14 And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron.

15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the Lord.

16 And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites.

17 For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the Lord.

18 For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good Lord pardon every one

19 That prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.

20 And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

2 CHRONICLES, xxx. 10-20.

The kingdom had been divided. Hezekiah reigned in Judah; Hoshea over Israel. Hezekiah was making great efforts to put away idolatry and restore the worship of God. In doing this, he resolved upon an observance of the passover feast, and invited all Israel to join him. His invitation was couched in strong language, yet truthfully set forth the blessings that would follow obedience to God. But, as is often the case, they were joined to their idols, and but few, comparatively, accepted the invitation. But Judah came in great numbers and observed the feast. They first put away all the altars that had been used in idolatrous worship. So we must put away from us everything that hinders God from having the supreme love of our hearts. He will not tolerate us, or anything we do, until we have cast out every idol. If we love wife, child, fame, houses, lands, gold or silver, more than we love him, he will not accept us. This was not the regular time, and many of the people were not sanctified to eat the passover. But Hezekiah allowed them to eat it, and prayed God to overlook the irregularity. His prayer was heard, by which God teaches us that he looks more to the heart of the worshiper than the mere form. He will forgive any irregularity when the heart is right. "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

Ps & 7s. Though our sins, our hearts confounding,
Long and loud for vengeance call,
Thou hast mercy more abounding:
Jesus' blood can cleanse them all.

Let that mercy veil transgression;
Let that blood our guilt efface;
Save thy people from oppression;
Save from spoil thy holy place.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him;

24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. GENESIS, xxxvii. 19-24.

28 Then there passed by Midianites, merchant-men; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;

32 And they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

GENESIS, xxxvii. 28-35.

This scripture brings Joseph before us full of the spirit of obedience. He had cheerfully started at his father's word, though he knew the hatred of his brethren. When he did not find them at Shechem, he might have returned with a good excuse. But his obedient spirit led him to make most diligent search. What an example for every youth! How crime begets crime! "Envy brought forth malice, deceit and lying, the intent of murder, and the kindred crimes." The human heart is a fountain of iniquity. Envy banishes pity; and when malice is kindled, it hesitates at no barbarity. We should be very careful about the beginnings of sin, and never cherish it. If we give any countenance to evil suggestions, worse ones will follow until we are deep in crime. What instruction in this incident in Jacob's life! He deceived his father, his children deceived him, and what an amount of suffering did he have in those twenty years, before Joseph was found! Surely every person can imagine something of his inconsolable grief. But most of all, how mysterious are God's providences, as this story reveals them! What they are to us they have been to God's people always. In Joseph humiliated, sold, we see a type of Jesus, hated of his own nation, sold by a professed disciple. Let us examine carefully our hearts, cast out the seeds of evil, ere a frightful crop of crimes mature.

S. M. In every trying hour
My soul to Jesus flies;
I trust in his almighty power,
Whom swelling billows rise.

His comforts bear me up:
I trust the faithful God;
The sure foundation of my hope
Is in my Saviour's blood.

1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

1 TIMOTHY, iii. 1-16.

The Lord Jesus makes very positive demands of his followers. They are to strive after purity of heart and holiness of life. He would have them blameless and spotless, without reproach. In them the transforming power of the gospel must be exhibited. This is required of all. Our selection emphasizes the need of these things in those who hold offices in the church, not because they are really more needful in them than in others, but rather because of their conspicuous position. Any deviation from strict integrity, spotless purity, and blameless living would be more noticeable in them, and hence might do more harm than in the private Christian. But, as a matter of fact, every Christian is under the strongest obligation to conform his life to that of his Lord, seeking his Spirit, that his life may illustrate the truth he professes to love. A church whose officers possess the qualifications here noticed, whose members are well disciplined in gospel doctrines, is "the stay and witness of the truth, bearing through all the ages her sublime, unbroken testimony to the incarnation of the Son of God, to the holiness of his person and life, to his resurrection and ascension, and to his gospel as the message of grace and salvation to be preached throughout the whole world."

C. M. They saw him break the bars of death,
Which none e'er broke before,
And rise in conquering majesty,
To stoop to death no more.

They brought his chariot from the skies,
To bear him to his throne,
Clapped their triumphant wings, and cried,
"The glorious work is done!"

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;

14 They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in.

17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.

GENESIS, vii. 11-24.

We have been familiar with the story of the ark from childhood. To mention the ark is to carry us back to our mother's side, and we listen once more to the oft-repeated story from her sainted lips. Nearly all know something of this; yet how few fathom the depths of sin and grace of which the ark speaks! Too many Bible readers even, simply stand at "the threshold, but do not enter into the wide chamber" which God floods with light. Like Hagar, thirsting, a well of water is near, but they see it not. But there was a preacher of righteousness, whom, with his family, God would save. Hence the command, "Build an ark." In it he was saved. The significance of the ark to us is, that it is an emblem of Christ's complete salvation. He is the refuge in every storm. He is our hiding-place. He is "that safe building whose foundations were laid in eternity's counsels; which was erected in due time on earth; whose roof is in the heavens." He is the sure covert, sheltering the soul from all the raging storms of vengeance, and all the fury of the waves of wrath. "Our glorious sanctuary is the glorious Jesus." Are you in the ark of safety now? Jesus is the gospel ark. He comes near to take in every soul that will enter, and when in, he shuts the door, and all are safe. All who entered the ark were saved; outside, all was destruction. In Christ there is perfect safety: without him we must perish.

S. M. Behold the ark of God;
Behold the open door;
O, haste to gain that dear abode,
And rove, my soul, no more.

There safe thou shalt abide,
There sweet shall be thy rest,
And every longing satisfied,
With full salvation blest.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx-stone.

13 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

18 And the Lord God said, It is not good

that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him.

21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

GENESIS, ii. 10-24.

Our bodies are made from the dust of the earth. Pride would like a high origin; but pride must bow low. "Dust thou art," says God. Rich or poor, monarch or beggar, we are one in this origin. But if the casket be made of clay, it holds a matchless jewel. Man's spirit came from heaven. If the body is a clog of matter, the soul is a ray from God. It is immortal; it cannot cease to be. "Age after age imprints no wrinkle on it. It neither withers nor decays. Its time is timeless; its death is never." As a palace for creation's Lord, God made him a most holy garden. Fruits and flowers abounded, satisfying every want. God was his companion. Life was an unalloyed pleasure. "The smile of innocence met the smile of heaven. The heart was only love; the worship only praise." God laid no heavy command on man; he asked only obedience. The fruit of one tree only he must not touch, for death is there. Surely he needs it not. Every want is met in the abundant provision which God has made for him. What a picture of innocence and holiness is before us! What love has God for these fair creatures whom he has made and surrounded with everything pleasing and ravishing to every sense!

C. M. Naked, as from the earth we came,
And rose to life at first,
We to the earth return again,
And mingle with the dust.

The dear delights we here enjoy,
And fondly call our own,
Are only favors borrowed now,
To be repaid anon.

1 Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

2 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God.

3 Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

4 Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

5 The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

6 I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

7 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.

8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey:

for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

12 I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

ZEPHANIAH, iii. 1-13.

No city ever had more righteous laws or just statutes than Jerusalem. Yet in the administration of her government great injustice was done. Her rulers were oppressive, and her religious teachers faithless and deceitful. Even Jehovah's presence had not shamed them, nor his judgments on other nations warned them; therefore they must suffer. Captivity was their doom. The eyes of God are in every place. He beholdeth the evil and the good. He comes, and his reward is with him. The wicked cannot escape; they must suffer in the day of his wrath. He cannot spare, for he is holy and just. Their punishment will be measured by the degree of light and knowledge they have enjoyed. Our judgment approves this; conscience says it is right. What does he behold in us? Do not our sins call for judgment? What light we possess! Will not the wrath be great? But God promised that a new era should dawn on Israel. After his judgments were overpast, a new reign of righteousness should begin. The people shall be pure, devout, humble, thankful. God waits to be merciful, and if we will believe on his Son, and serve him with pure hearts, he will bestow great blessings on us.

S. M. O, let the nations round
Their cheerful powers employ,
And earth's far-distant coasts resound
With shouts of sacred joy!

Then earth, thy grace confessed,
Shall pour its fruits abroad:
By thee thy numerous church be blest,
O Lord, our gracious God.

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters

called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

GENESIS, i. 1-19.

God is here presented to us as the Creator of all things. His self-existence, the spirituality of his being, his eternity, and his omnipotence are revealed in the fact of creation. His wisdom brings order out of chaos, arranges the succession of created things, and adjusts the several elements of our globe, and all the parts and members of the material universe to each other in a beautiful and perpetual harmony. His love also appears in his purpose, that everything which he made should be good — good in itself, good in its place, good for its uses, and good in its effects. Only sin has marred the beauty and goodness of the works of God. Solomon says, "Physical light is sweet;" but we know that gospel light is far more precious, since it reveals the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; reveals eternal things, and shows us how we may enjoy them. "Spiritual light has many beams and prismatic colors; but whether they be knowledge, joy, holiness, or life, all are divinely good." We need to be very careful lest we close our eyes to these heavenly rays, and doom ourselves to eternal darkness.

C. M. Spirit of power and might, behold
A world by sin destroyed:
Creator Spirit, as of old,
Move on the formless void.

Give thou the Word: that healing sound
Shall quell the deadly strife,
And earth again, like Edén crowned,
Bring forth the tree of life.

If sang the morning stars for joy
When nature rose to view,
What strains will angel harps employ
When thou shalt all renew!
And if the sons of God rejoice
To hear a Saviour's name,
How will the ransomed raise their voice
To whom that Saviour came!

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat therof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.

GENESIS, iii. 4-17.

Sin is rebellion against God; it is putting self in God's place, obeying one's own will rather than God's word. Sin drives God from the heart, and keeps him from coming into the soul. Hence it is a fearful curse. None can sound the depths of woe which it brought upon the race. If God is absent, then every spiritual faculty withers; then the body is death-stricken; then the soul is dead. In the mysterious problem of free will is necessarily involved the possibility of disobedience to God. Into the subtle snare spread for him man fell. He listened to the first lie, broke the one command of God, and so lifted the floodgates of evil. Sin entered; innocence fled. The divine image was destroyed; only God can restore it. But though man has ruined himself, God has not ceased to love him. His wondrous wisdom and abounding grace has provided a remedy. Jesus has restored the broken law, having satisfied all its claims, and freely offers pardon, purity, peace, joy, eternal blessedness to all who come to him in penitence and trust. The only question is, Have we come and committed to his safe-keeping our eternal interests?

C. M. How sad our state by nature is!
Our sin, how deep its stains!
And Satan binds our captive mind
Fast in his slavish chains.

39

But, hark! a voice of sovereign love!
"Tis Christ's inviting word, —
"Ho! ye despairing sinners, come.
And trust upon the Lord."

18 Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?

20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant.

21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them.

22 Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

23 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?

24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God.

25 And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said.

26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.

27 For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

28 And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

29 Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.

2 SAMUEL, vii. 18-29.

What a sure promise! Sure mercies. But if this promise had had reference to an earthly throne simply, how little interest we should have had in it. It is because it refers to the King of kings, our Saviour, that the promise thrills our hearts to-day. David desired to build a house for God, but the Lord had reserved that honor for Solomon. In communicating this intelligence, the Lord gave David a great promise, which wholly reconciled him. Not only was he to have a son who should build him a house, but the throne was to be established in his family forever. The promise was so great, so wondrous, so precious, that David could only go in and sit down before the ark, saying, "Lord, do as thou hast said." Who can measure the blessings which the true believer has in the promises of God? Does he stand on these, a solid rock is beneath him. Does he kneel on them, he cannot pray in vain. No man can use such arguments in prayer as the promises of God give us. When we look up with an eye of faith and say, "Do as thou hast said," God will never turn us away. We may feel unworthy, and yet say, Lord, great as this is, it is just what my soul wants! "Do as thou hast said." God loves to see his promises in circulation. Let us bring them to him, and say, "Lord, do as thou hast said."

S. M. Jesus, thou Friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand from every snare and foe
Shall great deliverance bring.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2 I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, but thou art rich; and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some

of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

REVELATION, ii. 1-17.

In these three letters, Jesus says to the churches, "My love has only increased, yours has declined. You have zeal for purity and truth; you are active and patient; but you have not your first love for these things." Could Jesus say this to you, reader? Can you forget that bright hour when the burden went, the roll of promise was given, as you stood by the cross? You said, "Lord, I am wholly thine; all I have and all I am I would devote to thee." How about this promise? Would Jesus say, "Perhaps this is a cold heart, when it should glow with summer's heat?" We must beware, for coldness and formality will bring darkness and decay. Jesus wants a whole-hearted service. If we would have the fruit of the tree of life, the crown of life, the hidden manna, the white stone with its new name, we must be faithful and overcome, though it cost us our life. For it we shall obtain a glorious life. It will be worth more than all earth's crowns. On that day of days, Christ's approving smile will reward for all suffering.

L. M. O, where is now that glowing love
That marked our union with the Lord?
Our hearts were fixed on things above,
Nor could the world a joy afford.

Behold, again we turn to thee:
O, cast us not away, though vile:
No peace we have, no joy we see,
O Lord our God, but in thy smile.

8 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they, seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

MATTHEW, xiii. 3-17.

A parable is an exposition of a moral or religious doctrine by a narrative taken from ordinary life. Here we see why so much seed fails of bringing fruit; why so many are not profited by preaching. Satan is one of the preacher's most constant hearers, but he goes to church for no good purpose. He enters the pew where the careless, inattentive, way-side hearer sits, and snatches away the seed. He sits by another who is all attention, joyfully receiving the word, but giving no thought. This one does not weigh the word. He hears, but does not practice the truth. There is no root of grace; the heart is hard and stony. There is a little earth, some softness, some feeling on the surface, but no depth, and the seed quickly dies. He sees another listening attentively, and fills his mind with earthly cares; there thorns choke and prevent the growth. There are pews the devil never enters, for he knows it would be a waste of time. There sit those whose hearts are neither hard, nor shallow, nor weedy; but they are good and honest, ready to receive the word and keep it. They bring forth fruit with patience. If we would keep Satan out of our hearts, we must heed well the word of truth, giving it thought and weighing it well.

S. M. How happy are our ears,
That hear this joyful sound!
Which kings and prophets waited for,
And sought, but never found.

How blessed are our eyes,
That see this heavenly light!
Prophets and kings desired it long,
But died without the sight.

4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

HEBREWS, vi. 4-18.

This selection is a fervid exhortation not to be satisfied with a low state of piety. It is very dangerous, exposing one to apostasy. Paul gives us the six primary spiritual requirements, and final sanctions of Christianity. No one is satisfied with simply reading the introduction of a valuable book,—he would master its contents. So the believer should not be satisfied with the first lessons of the gospel, but study its great truths. The terrible condition of apostates is another motive for advancing in the Christian life. He who turns away from Christ's salvation may be sure there is none other. He will be left utterly hopeless, having incurred the awful guilt of crucifying Christ afresh. With such dangers before us, should we not continue patiently in well-doing; not being "slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises"? Yet this word, *slothful*, truly characterizes the habits of many of Christ's professed followers. They are diligent in business, but they are *not* fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Who can estimate the value of a good hope? It is firm and steadfast, because it takes hold on heaven. This is made sure and real by the entrance of our High Priest. As no storm can loosen the anchor imbedded in the rock, so hope, which is grounded in Christ, is sure. Have we this hope? We shall need it. Let us lay hold on it.

T. M. Why should my passions mix with earth,
And man's debase my heavenly birth?
Why should I cleave to things below,
And let my God, my Saviour, go?

Call me away from flesh and sense;
One sovereign word can draw me thence;
I would obey the voice divine,
And all inferior joys resign.

4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools:

6 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity.

7 Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

8 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

12 For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence . but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

13 Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also

hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

16 Be not righteous over-much, neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?

17 Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?

18 It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.

20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

21 Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee.

22 For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

23 All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.

24 That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

ECCLESIASTES, vii. 4-24.

The benefits of wisdom are here put before us in forcible words. Without it we cannot order our lives aright. Life is a serious matter, and a wise man will sooner be found among mourners, than keeping company with, and joining the folly of fools. For a truly wise man the end of a thing is always better than the beginning. On earth the man Christ Jesus was despised ; but in heaven he sits on a throne. His disciples have many sufferings here ; but they shall find fullness of joy at his right hand. It is a worm in the beginning ; it is the bright-winged butterfly in the end. On earth, believers are rough diamonds ; but they are polished jewels in his crown. Wisdom helps us to see the good in all times, as well as the evils ; so that we do not regard our own as worse than former days. There is wickedness at any time, and there is always good. The great blessing of Wisdom is that she gives life to all who possess her. She tempers our joy in prosperity, and our sadness in adversity, and leads us to remember that our life is a mingled cup, not all bright nor all dark. Wisdom is the principal thing, and by it we are taught to fear, reverence, and love God.

L. M. Wisdom divine! who tells the price
Of Wisdom's costly merchandise?
Wisdom to silver we prefer,
And gold is dross compared to her.

Her hands are filled with length of days,
True riches, and immortal praise,—
Riches of Christ on all bestowed,
And honor that descends from God.

19 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, ne ther shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done be shall live.

23 If have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

25 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not

equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

29 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

EZEKIEL, xviii. 19-32.

There was a proverb in Israel, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The idea was to find an excuse for their sin. But God sent his prophet to tell his people that every one was responsible for the sins he had committed, and for these only should he be punished. We have nothing to do, in the way of punishment, with the sins of others; it is our own guilt that will condemn us. Every one stands or falls on his own record. We are taught, also, that it is perseverance in well-doing that will secure the final, great reward. Past experiences are of no avail, if our hearts are not right before God to-day. We must continue in righteousness if we would have God's blessing; and if we do not, we show very plainly that we are deluding ourselves with a false hope. God has shown the world that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. His word, so gracious, so full of mercy, and overflowing with promises, is a standing monument of his desire to save sinners. There, too, is the cross of his Son, to speak when all else is dumb, and tell us that God's heart yearns for the salvation of the lost.

7s. All my guilt to thee is known;
Thou art righteous, thou alone:
All my help is from thy cross;
All beside I count but loss.

Lord, in thee I now believe;
Wilt thou, wilt thou not forgive?
Helpless at thy feet I lie:
Saviour, leave me not to die.

1 And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his

robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed, nor drink water:

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

9 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

JONAH, iii. 1-10.

Jonah had been disobedient to the voice of God, and had suffered severely for it. He had repented, confessed his sin, and sought and found forgiveness. God now tests his repentance by renewing his command. The surest sign of God's forgiveness is his using us. When he forgives, he forgets. Nineveh was a great, important, but very wicked city. God shows his forbearance by giving them space for repentance, but he will endure their wickedness no longer. Jonah had demurred at taking such a message, but now he has learned to obey. God's ministers are very plainly told in his word the message they are to utter: he will not change it to suit the notions of preachers or hearers. He understands what is best, and none others may judge of it. The message, faithfully delivered, produced remarkable results. The whole city, from the king to the beggar, was moved by the words, and humbled themselves and found forgiveness. God gave Nineveh forty days for a thorough reformation, a long time for him to keep back his judgments; but none too much for that great city to repent. God has not promised us forty days; he commands all men now to repent. The avenging sword may descend quickly, and send us swift to death. Wise are we if we repent at once. His mercy will spare, and his grace will save, if we obey now To-morrow it may be too late.

I. M. Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive;
Let a repenting rebel live;
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

My crimes are great, but don't surpass
The power and glory of thy grace;
Great God, thy nature hath no bound, —
So let thy pardoning love be found.

O wash my soul from every sin,
And make my guilty conscience clean;
Here on my heart the burden lies,
And past offences pain my eyes.

My lips with shame my sins confess,
Against thy law, against thy grace;
Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

2 And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

3 Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.

4 Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry?

5 So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

6 And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

10 Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night?

11 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

JONAH, iv. 1-11.

If Jonah was exceedingly angry, the Lord was exceedingly kind and tender toward him. Here is proof positive of what he said of the character of God, "Gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." God's treatment of Jonah is not less an evidence of all this than his sparing Nineveh. How gentle are his reproofs! How easy it is for God to convict us of folly, while showing us his wisdom and grace! "Man's wickedness and God's goodness serve here as a foil to each other, that the former may appear the more exceedingly sinful, and the latter the more exceedingly gracious." It is impossible to find any reasonable excuse for the conduct of Jonah. He was selfish and wicked. Here were six hundred thousand people; one fifth of them helpless, innocent children; and Jonah was angry at God for sparing them. O, the weakness of human nature! We are indignant at such conduct in the prophet; are we guiltless? Can we throw stones because we are innocent? Does not God often find us as fretful, peevish, angry with even less cause than Jonah had, for he thought his own honor and that of Israel at stake? There is such a thing as righteous anger. Elijah had it against Baal's prophets; but we do well to question ourselves closely, for we seldom do well to be angry.

C. M. Since all the varying scenes of time
God's watchful eye surveys,
O, who so wise to choose our lot,
Or to appoint our ways?

Good when he gives, — supremely good, —
Nor less when he denies;
E'en crosses, from his sovereign hand,
Are blessings in disguise.

40

Why should we doubt a Father's love,
So constant and so kind?
To his unerring, gracious will
Be every wish resigned.

In thy fair book of life divine,
My God, inscribe my name;
There let it fill some humble place,
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb

1 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

2 And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

3 And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built,

4 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cup-bearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her.

5 And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom:

6 Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard.

7 Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.

8 Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the Lord thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.

9 And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

10 And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought gold from Ophir, brought alnum trees and precious stones.

11 And the king made of the alnum trees terraces to the house of the Lord, and to the king's palace, and harps and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.

12 And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.

2 CHRONICLES, ix. 1-12.

This story is a suggestion of the great wisdom and prosperity which God had given to Solomon. It had given him a world-wide reputation. No matter what our position, there are always hard questions which we are unable to solve. But we may be comforted by the thought, that there is a wiser than Solomon to whom we may go and have all difficulties removed. When we come to the Lord Jesus with our burdened thoughts, and trustingly tell him our troubles, we too are led to say, The half was not told us; his wisdom and grace exceed all our thoughts. When we are enjoying the richest experiences of his love, we are sure that there is much more to follow. The queen thought those highly favored who could live in Solomon's presence and hear his wisdom. But what was that compared to our privilege of having the abiding presence of Christ, and being the happy subjects of his reign? The queen gave a magnificent present to Solomon; but we may give to Jesus a jewel which he will prize more highly than millions of treasures. We may give him our heart's true love, and loyal service; and we shall receive most precious gifts in return. Let us go to Jesus. It is not a long journey; he is at the door; open it, and let him come in.

I. M.

How vast his knowledge! how profound!
A depth where all our thoughts are drowned!
The stars he numbers, and their names
He gives to all those heavenly frames.

But in redemption, O, what grace!
Its wonders, O, what thought can trace!
Hence wisdom shines forever bright;
Praise him, my soul, with sweet delight

15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;

16 Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,

18 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;

19 When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.

20 And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people;

21 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes,

22 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

23 Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.

24 Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25 For great is the Lord, and greatly to

be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods.

26 For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

27 Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place.

28 Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

29 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

30 Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.

31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.

32 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth.

1 CHRONICLES, xvi. 15-33.

David had just brought the ark of the covenant into the tabernacle in Jerusalem. God's glory should be the central thought in all our songs and praises. Our lives should be perpetual thanksgivings. In our prayers, our songs, our discourses, we are to glorify him as as the great, sole, supreme God. This God has entered into covenant with his people, binding himself to seek only their good, promising, if they are faithful, to withhold no good thing. He promised Canaan, and through many vicissitudes brought them safely into possession, they confessing that nothing had failed. But salvation is the great theme on which we are to dwell. David saw it only at early dawn; while ours is the full-orbed midday glory. His glimmering light filled him with joy; what are the inexhaustible benefits we receive! Remembering God's goodness in the giving of Jesus, praise should employ all our breath. The loudest note of our daily and nightly song of universal praise should be of *salvation*. Salvation is the bliss of the blissful, the joy of the joyful, the happiness of the happy, the song of the singing, the peace of the peaceful, the rest of the resting, the glory of the glorified.

C. M. Sing to the Lord Jehovah's name,
And in his strength rejoice;
When his salvation is our theme,
Exalted be our voice.

With thanks approach his awful sight,
And psalms of honor sing;
The Lord's a God of boundless might,
The whole creation's King.

Come, and with humble souls adore:
Come, kneel before his face:
O, may the creatures of his power
Be children of his grace.

Now is the time,— he bends his ear.
And waits for your request;
Come, lest he rouse his wrath, and swear,
“ Ye shall not see my rest.”

1 Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.

2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

5 Remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

7 Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.

10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

11 Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant. *PSALMS, cxliii. 1-12.*

David was in sore trouble, and greatly needed God's help. The fact of God's covenant engagements gave him hope, which was strengthened by remembering how he vindicated those who were unjustly oppressed. All our blessings are the tokens of God's favor; they are unmerited gifts. David found great comfort in remembering former days, when the candle of the Lord shone round about him. He stretched forth his hands to God, and begged to be led. He thirsted for God. His cry was heard, his prayer was answered; his enemies were destroyed; he was elevated to the throne, and greatly prospered. If we go to the Lord, trusting only in him, casting aside all thought of merit in ourselves, we shall be heard and greatly blessed by him. But we must go as the thirsty soul, knowing that he alone can satisfy us. We must go as beggars, utterly destitute, and unable to care for ourselves. We must act with importunity, with firm confidence, and calm reliance. Doing his will so far as it is made known to us, is the sure way of having further revelations. He that doeth God's will shall know of the doctrine. God will lead every one who wants to be led by him. "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."

S. M. My God, my prayer attend;

O, how thine ear to me;
Without a hope, without a friend,
Without a help, but thee.

O, guard my soul around,
Which loves and trusts thy grace;
Nor let the powers of hell confound
The hopes on thee I place.

Thy mercy I entreat;
Let mercy hear my cries,
While, humbly waiting at thy seat,
My daily prayers arise.

O, bid my heart rejoice,
And every fear control,
Since at thy throne, with suppliant voice,
To thee I lift my soul.

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:

5 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

10 And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou builddest not,

11 And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full:

12 Then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

13 Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

15 For the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you; lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

16 Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.

17 Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

18 And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers,

19 To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the Lord hath spoken.

DEUTERONOMY, vi. 4-19.

We have just read what Christ calls the first great commandment,—that we should love God with all our being. The other commandment is like it,—that we love our neighbor as ourselves. This embraces the whole duty of man. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments. It is so important that we remember these commands that God has directed us to write them on our gates and on the posts of our houses, also on our hands and between our eyes, that we may see them all the time, that they may never be forgotten. We are to have them in our hearts, to love them, and live by them; to teach them diligently to our children. Let us never neglect this duty. We are never to get weary of talking about these great requirements. When we sit down to rest, or visit in our houses, this command is to have a very prominent place. All who live in our homes should hear them. When we walk abroad with our friends we should talk of these things, as Jesus did with the two Emmaus travelers. This conversation should go into our most hallowed and sacred circles. In prosperity, let us remember God; in adversity, let us trust him. Jesus says, "Lo, I am with you always." Our reply should be, "Come, Lord Jesus, and be my guest, my Beloved, my Redeemer, my Keeper, my most intimate Friend, and eternal reward."

7s & 6s. Tell me the old, old story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
Of Jesus and his love

Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child,
For I am weak and weary,
And helpless and defiled.

1 Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?

2 For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.

3 I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.

5 Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.

6 Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

7 Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

8 I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

9 Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

10 Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:

11 To set up on high those that be low;

that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

12 He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.

13 He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

14 They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

15 But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16 So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

18 For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.

JOB, v. 1-20.

What a comfort in our Heavenly Father's corrections to know that he makes no mistakes, that he cannot do wrong! Eliphaz says, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth." His corrections "yield the fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby." We may, therefore, welcome them as blessings in disguise. God wounds in love, then binds up and makes whole. Let us trust him in six troubles, even in seven. No evil shall harm the believer. Afflictions are not born of the dust, and troubles do not spring from the ground. God overrules all for the good of his redeemed ones. God did not allow Job to be afflicted because he was astray from him, but evidently to let the universe see that grace could sustain under the severest trial. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. Let us learn from this not to judge one another. Job's friends made a great mistake in judging and condemning him. They had to get him to pray for them, that God might forgive and turn his wrath from them. God turned Job's captivity when he prayed for his friends, and brought him out of all his trials. So will he do with all who put their trust in him. He may take them through the furnace, but it is only "to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

8s, 7s, & 4s.

Every human tie may perish;
Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
Mothers cease their own to cherish;
Heaven and earth at last remove;
But no changes
Can attend Jehovah's love.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright,
But can never cease to love thee;
Thou art precious in his sight:
God is with thee -
God, thine everlasting light.

10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

13 On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the

city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

REVELATION, xxi. 10-27.

We have here a view of heaven through a very sublime figure. Look at the figure. A city about fifteen hundred miles in circumference; walls built of very rare and costly stones; twelve gates of solid pearl, the value of each gate about equal to all the property in this world; streets of pure gold, "as it were transparent glass;" a beautiful river running through it, with banks lined by trees of life, with great variety of fruit, and yielding fruit every month. Its light is soft and clear, and, as its inhabitants never sleep, there is no night there. No pain or death, and so no funerals are ever attended there. All the good, and all the pure and holy, are there; the Father there; the Son there; the Spirit there; the angels there. Everything there we can desire or wish. This is heaven in a figure. If the figure is so glorious, what must the reality be? Nothing unclean, or that maketh a lie, can enter there. Only those who have been born again, whose names are in God's family record (Lamb's book), can enter there. None can live there without purity. God will not be so cruel as to keep any one there without religion. Would we not rather be crucified than fail of a home in that beautiful city? Let us go at once to the fountain filled with blood, and wash our guilt away.

L. M. A beautiful land by faith I see,
A land of rest, from sorrow free,
The home of the ransomed, bright and fair,
And beautiful angels, too, are there.
Will you go? Will you go? &c.

That beautiful land, the city of light,
It ne'er has known the shades of night;
The glory of God, the light of day,
Hath driven the darkness far away.
Will you go? Will you go? &c.

1 Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for
praise is comely for the upright.

2 Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto
him with the psaltery and an instrument of
ten strings.

3 Sing unto him a new song; play skil-
fully with a loud noise.

4 For the word of the Lord is right; and
all his works are done in truth.

5 He loveth righteousness and judgment:
the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

6 By the word of the Lord were the heav-
ens made; and all the host of them by the
breath of his mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea to-
gether as a heap: he layeth up the depth in
storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all
the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of
him.

9 For he spake, and it was done; he com-
manded, and it stood fast.

10 The Lord bringeth the counsel of the
heathen to nought: he maketh the devices
of the people of none effect.

11 The counsel of the Lord standeth for
ever, the thoughts of his heart to all genera-
tions.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the
Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen
for his own inheritance.

13 The Lord looketh from heaven; he be-
holdeth all the sons of men.

14 From the place of his habitation he
looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he
considereth all their works.

16 There is no king saved by the multitude
of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by
much strength.

17 A horse is a vain thing for safety:
neither shall he deliver any by his great
strength.

18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon
them that fear him, upon them that hope in
his mercy;

19 To deliver their soul from death, and to
keep them alive in famine.

20 Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our
help and our shield.

21 For our heart shall rejoice in him, be-
cause we have trusted in his holy name.

22 Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us,
according as we hope in thee.

PSALMS, XXXIII. 1-22.

We are told in this Psalm, that "the Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men." Let us reflect upon this truth. Does God see every step I take, and every thing I do? Have I done one thing to-day I would not have done if I had seen God by me? or said one word I would not have said if I had realized that God heard me? David says, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." "Let us not dare to sin, for God is there." But there is a bright side to this truth, "Thou God seest me." Are we poor and destitute, our Father in heaven sees it, and will in due time supply our wants, if we trust in him. Does Satan seek to overthrow our faith, God witnesses the struggle, and comes to our aid. Jesus said to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Are we weeping over lost men to lead them to embrace Christ, God's eye follows us; he bottles every tear, records every sigh, and blesses every effort for the good of others. In all the labor and trials of life God sees us, and in death he is near to sustain, and bring us to our many-mansioned home. Let us join the Psalmist, and praise the Lord with the harp; and sing unto him a new song. Blessed are "the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Let us ask everything that hath breath to praise the Lord, and say, "Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee."

L. M. Where can we hide, or whither fly,
Lord, to escape thy piercing eye?
With thee it is not day and night,
But darkness shineth as the light.

Search us, O God, and know each heart;
With every idol bid us part;
Make us to keep thy holy ways,
And live to utter forth thy praise.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

ROMANS, vii. 9-25.

The impressive lesson which we gather from this portion of Scripture is the longing of a Christian to know how to live and walk in Christ without condemnation, and the hopeless struggle to reach that condition by his own efforts. Paul declares his love for the law of God; he delighted in it, and tried to be faithful; but he was often brought into captivity. He made vows that he would be true, but could not perform them, and cried out, in view of it, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" He had a Saviour from eternal death, but now wanted some one to keep him hour by hour. He despaired of abiding in uninterrupted peace and rest in Christ by his own faithfulness. At this point of his longing and struggle he caught a glimpse of Christ as a keeping Saviour, and says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Accepting him as a keeping Saviour, he at once entered into the rest of faith, and says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." What the law could not do, what his faithfulness had failed to accomplish, he found God had sent his Son to do. Although imperfect and weak, he entered into rest, rest in trials and labors, not from them. Jesus says to every one, "According to your faith be it unto you."

11s.

Dear Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;
I want thee forever to live in my soul;
Break down every idol, cast out every foe;
Now, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

CHORUS. Whiter than snow, &c.

41

Dear Jesus, for this I most humbly entreat;
I wait, blessed Lord, at thy crucified feet,
By faith, for my cleansing, I see thy blood flow;
Now, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

CHORUS. Whiter than snow, &c.

21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

MATTHEW, xv. 21-39.

We have in this portion of Scripture an impressive illustration of the power of persistent prayer. When this mother first came to Jesus he answered her not a word. She seems then to have besought his disciples to use their influence in her behalf; but still he appears to refuse her petition, though really only testing her faith by holding up a little difficulty. She now lets go of all human dependence, and casts herself at his feet, saying, "Lord, help me." His reply was a still severer test to any but a thoroughly contrite and earnest heart. And when he saw that she was not moved from her purpose, but was humble and thankful for even a crumb, he gave her the loaf, saying, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt," and her daughter was made whole from that very hour. So if we want Christ to bless, we must press through difficulties, and not allow ourselves to be discouraged in prayer, even if for a while Christ answers not a word. This Scripture teaches us also that we have a compassionate Saviour. Out of all that strange and motley crowd of maimed, and sick, and blind, that pressed around him, he sent none away unhealed. Nor would he send the multitude away hungry; they must be fed before they undertook the journey. This tender, loving Jesus is our Saviour; the resources of the universe are at his command; we may freely go to him with all our trials and wants. He will not turn us away empty.

7s. Lord, I cannot let thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow;
Do not turn away thy face,
Mine's an urgent, pressing case.

No, I must maintain my hold;
'Tis thy goodness makes me bold;
I can no denial take,
Since I plead for Jesus' sake.

1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto

you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

JOHN, xvi. 1-15.

When great trial is upon us, we think the world can never look bright again. So it was with the disciples. No one had before known a Friend so tender and helpful as Jesus; and now to face the world with its scorn and hate, and to take up the stern duties of their calling without him, seemed unendurable. But the sympathizing Jesus can be trusted to more than make up for every loss and trial which he brings. "It is expedient for you that I go away,"—strange words to their ears; doubtful words to their weak faith; but words fully established in their hearts by the experience of after years. The third Person in the Trinity, the equal of the Father and the Son, the inspirer of prophets and patriarchs in all the past, was to enter into a new relationship with men, and as abiding Comforter, Guide, and Teacher, to more than make up for the loss of Christ's bodily presence. Blessed promise, on which the church in every age since has rested with joy unspeakable! Faithful Friend, showing lost men their danger, convincing them of sin, unfolding the Scriptures, and bringing us into fellowship with the Father and the Son! Nor does his work close with leading us to Christ. He abides with us forever; he is the divine Commentator, and in the shining of his light the pages of inspiration grow luminous and precious. He guides into all truth,—not one-sided ideas of it; led by him, the character grows symmetrical and strong. In all our care and work he is at hand to give us the needed wisdom. Who will refuse to yield to such a Friend, or to join the doxology of praise to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

C. M. The things of Christ the Spirit takes,
And to our hearts reveals;
Our bodies he his temple makes,
And our redemption seals.

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
One God, whom we adore,
Be glory, as it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

4 Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing-time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

8 And five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

10 And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.

11 And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.

12 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

13 I am the Lord your God, which brought

you forth out of the land of Egypt that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments:

15 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant;

16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall die when none pursueth you.

18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power: and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

20 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits. *LEVITICUS, xxvi. 3-20.*

What a cluster of rich, precious, and wonderful promises! These were all to be realized by Israel on one simple condition—obedience to God's word. Here is also a cluster of withering, destroying curses. These, too, were to be realized on one condition—disobedience. Israel found God true to his word. Obedience secured his favor; disobedience brought his curse. But these words are as true for us, for this household, for me, as they were to Israel. God is unchangeably the same; his word cannot be broken. If we love, trust, and obey him, he will supply our wants, protect us, give us victory over outward and inward foes, satisfy us with good things, grant us his favor, give us the tokens of his presence, and keep his covenant with us. What more can we want? And all these the reward of obedience. But if we despise his law, and contemn his corrections, then he will set his face against us, and bring sore judgments upon us,—bodily diseases, want, sorrow, trouble, fearful ruin. These are the words of the living and true God. All past history and experience show us unmistakably that it is for us to say whether we will have God for our friend, thus securing all the good things he can give us; or have him as our enemy by disobedience, and thus bring everlasting destruction. What shall it be? Be wise, my soul, make no mistake.

S. M. Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before thy face;
Thy Spirit must the work perform,
For it is all of grace.

Do thou my sins subdue,
Thy sovereign love make known;
The spirit of my mind renew,
And save me in thy Son.

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

MATTHEW, xi. 20-30.

We measure our own punishment by the guilt we incur in sinning against great light and knowledge. We have noonday brightness, God's word, the Sabbath, and sanctuary privileges, the family altar, and Christian examples. To sin against such light, and choose darkness, incurs fearful guilt. Can anything equal the gracious invitation of Jesus, "Come unto me"? Who is not a burden-bearer, and heavy-laden? Who is not seeking rest? The invitation is fitted to the whole world, especially to those who have not already found rest in Christ. What a thought is here! The God-man inviting the whole race to come to him, and find what they are all seeking. The whole gospel is comprehended in that gentle word of love, "Come;" Jesus never says "Do," but always, "Come," and the call to duty is, "Come, follow me." Reader, all your life, Jesus has been saying, "Come unto me." Your inmost spirit has often heard its whispers. Friends have carried it; his word has spoken it; his providence has declared it; the voices have sounded everywhere. Have you closed your ear, your heart, and refused his grace? Are you saying, I want no yoke? Think, you must bear sin's heavy yoke, if you will not Christ's easy one. It is only a yoke on the neck of sin. If you will not bear Christ's light burden, then you must bear the intolerable one of sin for eternity. Happy are the humble, teachable children who hear the invitation, and obey the call. Shall it not include you?

8s, 7s, & 4s.

Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Come in mercy's gracious hour;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Ful. of pity, love, and power:
He is able—
He is willing—doubt no more.

Let no sense of guilt prevent you,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him:
This he gives you;
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.

1 And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

8 And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 And he went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

MARK, ii. 1-13.

Jesus would honor such faith as this by his miraculous healing. But he was surrounded by cavilers from all parts of the land; hence he desired to make a deeper use of this incident. He would put the spiritual above the temporal, and make the miracle tributary to grace; hence he first forgave the man his sins. Murmuring of blasphemy were soon heard, since God alone can forgive sins. Jesus proves his right to forgive sins by restoring the paralytic with a word. God would not work a miracle to confirm a blasphemous usurpation of his prerogative. Then Christ must be divine. We may look to him for forgiveness of sins. What a lesson is here for our faith! "Faith is full of invitations." When we cannot get sinners where Jesus is with power to forgive and heal, in the usual way, we must not be afraid of uncommon means. We must be ready to use any means that will not be disgraceful. We need a bolder, more determined faith. Some method ought to be devised by which to reach the masses who will not come to our churches. If we have felt Christ's power of healing in our own souls, then through door, window, or roof, overcoming all obstacles, let us seek to bring men to Jesus. "If hunger for bread can break through stone walls, surely hunger for souls is not to be hindered in its effects."

S. M. O Christ, what gracious words
Are ever, ever thine!
Thy voice is music to the soul,
And life and peace divine.

Grace, everlasting grace,
Glad tidings, full of joy,
Flow from thy lips, the lips of truth,
And flow without alloy.

The broken heart, the poor,
The bruised, the deaf, the blind,
The dumb, the dead, the captive wretch,
In thee compassion find.

Lord Jesus, speed the day,
The promised day of grace,
To all the poor, the dumb, the deaf,
The dead of Adam's race.

1 Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.

2 Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx-stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colors, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.

3 Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

4 Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal:

5 The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?

6 Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly,

7 And gave, for the service of the house of God, of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron.

8 And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord, by the hand of Jechiel the Gershonite.

9 Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

1 CHRONICLES, xxix. 1-9.

“The Lord loveth a cheerful giver,” and David was a man “after God's own heart.” Certainly he comes before us as an excellent example for one occupying a prominent position. His affection was set on doing what he could to make God's house suitable to its high and holy purpose. Having given liberally, he could in good faith call on his people to do the same. To consecrate is to set apart for a special purpose. There were many rich men in Israel, and peaceful times were before them. It was fitting they should give liberally to this great work. The consecration of ourselves with all we have to God, is a Christian duty. Indeed, we cannot be Christians unless we have put all on God's altar. He accepts no half-hearted service. We cannot serve God and Mammon. He who is truly a child of God, holds himself and all he has at the Lord's disposal. When God wants him to help build churches, or aid any department of Christian work, he cheerfully gives. He realizes that all he has is God's gift to him; hence he must make suitable returns for such favors. Nothing contributes more to the peace and joy of God's servants than cheerful giving out of hearts that love his service.

L. M. Be thou exalted, O my God,
Above the heavens where angels dwell;
Thy power on earth be known abroad,
And land to land thy wonders tell.

My heart is fixed; my song shall raise
Immortal honors to his name;
Awake, my tongue, to sound his praise,
His wondrous goodness to proclaim.

High o'er the earth his mercy reigns,
And reaches to the utmost sky;
His truth to endless years remains,
When lower worlds dissolve and die

Be thou exalted, O my God,
Above the heavens where angels dwell;
Thy power on earth be known abroad,
And land to land thy wonders tell.

1 As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honor is not seemly for a fool.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

6 He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage.

7 The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

8 As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honor to a fool.

9 As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

10 The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

11 As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.

12 Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

13 The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.

14 As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.

15 The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

16 The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

17 He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.

18 As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death,

19 So is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, Am not I in sport?

20 Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.

21 As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

PROVERBS, XXVI. 1-21.

Solomon here shows the great evils which come from not having wisdom. Foolish persons are sometimes put in places of honor; but they are so unfitted for such positions, that the absurdity is very apparent. It is as bad as snow in summer, and as injurious as rain in harvest, which hinders the laborers, and spoils the ripened fruit. Under all circumstances folly makes wretched work. Life is a serious matter. We need wisdom to fill well every position. We may have it: God will give it, if we follow his instructions. She presses her treasures upon us, and it is only by closing our eyes and ears, that we can help taking in many of her lessons. Life is earnest. This world is no place for those who do not realize it, and put themselves to practical usefulness. We are not here for *dreaming*, but for *work*; and it is a great sin to pass our days in idleness. God has given us this life that we may use it in preparation for something better. We can only do this by seeking wisdom from on high, and then faithfully using our gifts in building up solid Christian characters. Seek wisdom, for she is above all price.

C. M. How blest the children of the Lord,
Who, walking in his sight,
Make all the precepts of his word
Their study and delight!

That precious wealth shall be their dower,
Which cannot know decay,
Which moth or rust shall ne'er devour,
Nor spoiler take away.

For them that heavenly light shall spread,
Whose cheering rays illumine
The darkest hours of life, and shed
A halo round the tomb.

Their works of piety and love,
Performed through Christ, their Lord,
Forever registered above,
Shall meet a sure reward.

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were

reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift: for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

ROMANS, v. 1-16.

Jesus took the sinner's place, suffered the penalty in his stead, and answered all the law's demands. By faith man becomes one with Christ, so that the law has no claim on him. Faith then justifies and clears him. It gives peace to his anxious heart; he has no fear of God's righteous displeasure, nor of divine wrath. He triumphs, not only in a glorious hope, but in troubles, gaining a power of endurance which confirms his hope. Hope will be realized, because the Holy Spirit makes him enjoy God's unparalleled love. When we were sinners he saved us by his death; and now that "he ever liveth," how much more may we trust him! We have faith in a living Saviour, who is able to save all who come to him. This gives true peace, because the sense of justice in both God and man is satisfied. This peace will be permanent, as the occasion of discord or conflict is removed. It will become perfect, since it depends on faith in Christ; which will increase as the work of grace matures. What blessedness is this! Reader, have you attained this? Not, unless you have found it by trusting in Christ. All other is spurious, which adversity will weaken, and death destroy. Peace which does not rest on forgiveness, on God reconciled by the blood of Christ, is worthless. The world has it not. It is Christ's, and he alone can give it. Trust him, and it is yours, — true, abiding, perfect.

S. M. Faith is a precious grace,
Where'er it is bestowed;
It boasts a high, celestial birth,
And is the gift of God

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Jesus it owns as King,
And all-atonung Priest;
It claims no merit of its own,
But looks for all in Christ.

1 I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse : I have gathered my myrrh with my spice ; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey ; I have drunk my wine with my milk : eat, O friends ; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

2 I sleep, but my heart waketh : it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled : for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I have put off my coat ; how shall I put it on ? I have washed my feet ; how shall I defile them ?

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved ; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

6 I opened to my beloved ; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone : my soul failed when he spake : I sought him, but I could not find him ; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

7 The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me ;

the keepers of the walls took away my vail from me.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women ? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us ?

10 My beloved is white and ruddy, the chieffest among ten thousand.

11 His head is as the most fine gold : his locks are bushy, and black as a raven :

12 His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set :

13 His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers : his lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh :

14 His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl : his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires :

15 His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold : his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

16 His mouth is most sweet : yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

SOLOMON'S SONG, v. 1-16.

How touchingly beautiful this whole poem, when the Spirit illuminates our hearts ! We see Christ with his bride and friends enjoying a sweet feast, where all the delicacies of the season are spread before the guests, and all are urged to satisfy themselves. Again the scene changes ; the Lord has been absent, and returning, he seeks admission, but the door is closed. The bride has lost her "first love," yet knows her husband is trying to enter. He leaves her door ; and then she awakes to a sense of her guilt and loss. Finding him gone, she seeks him in darkness, through suffering, and entreats all her friends to help her, describing him in most glowing words. Could anything be more true to the experience of most Christians than these touching pictures ? How often, after refreshing feasts with Jesus, does our love grow cold, so that when he returns to give new and fresh tokens of his love, he strives to gain admission ; but we have put off our robe, are comfortably in bed, and unwilling to rise. Roused by his providence or the Spirit, we realize our loss, mournfully seek him, suffer reproaches from his enemies, and have many sad and weary days before we find him.

78. Gently, gently, lay the rod
On my sinful head, O God !
Stay the wrath, in mercy stay,
Lest I sink beneath its sway.

Lo ! he comes—he heeds my plea ;
Lo ! he comes—the shadows flee ;
Glory round me dawns once more ;
Rise, my spirit, and adore.

1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

2 As they called them, so they went from them : they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.

3 I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them.

4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.

5 He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return.

6 And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels.

7 And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him.

8 How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? how shall I deliver thee, Israel ? how shall I make thee as Admah ? how shall I set thee as Zeboim ? mine heart is turned within me, my repents are kindled together.

9 I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.

10 They shall walk after the Lord: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.

11 They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord.

12 Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints.

HOSEA, xi. 1-12.

From Israel's childhood, the very beginning of his national life, God loved, delivered, and blessed him; yet he was ungrateful and unfaithful; hence God gave him up to severe chastisements. But his heart, full of divine love, yearns over his people; he cannot destroy; he will recall and restore them. He brings them back, not violently, but gently. Our Father often draws us with the cords of love, but alas, that we are so often unwilling to be drawn! He would have us trust him in everything; but we cannot have the world with him. How strange that we must cumber ourselves with the world, and bring leanness into our souls by our weak faith. God has promised to fill our mouths if we will open them wide, but we will not. How gently he speaks to us, and entreats us to trust him! He has taken away the veil, and would have us come boldly to the throne of his grace. We know he is worthy of the fullest confidence; but we fail to give it. He would hold sweet communion with our souls, hence asks us to his banqueting hall, that we may feast with him on the bounties of grace. Although he has so much to say to us, and such manifestations of grace and glory to make, yet we hold back. But his love will not be thwarted; he will do with affliction's rod what gentle entreaties failed to accomplish.

S. M. The pity of the Lord,

To those that fear his name,
Is such as tender parents feel;
He knows our feeble frame.

He knows we are but dust,
Scattered with every breath;
His anger, like a rising wind,
Can send us swift to death.

Our days are as the grass,
Or like the morning flower;
When blasting winds sweep o'er the field,
It withers in an hour.

But thy compassions, Lord,
To endless years endure;
And children's children ever find
Thy words of promise sure.

11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

12 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the Lord.

13 I will surely consume them, saith the Lord: there shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig-tree, and the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them.

14 Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord.

15 We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!

16 The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan: the whole land trembled at the

sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein.

17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cock-
atrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord.

18 When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me.

19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities?

20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

21 For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

— JEREMIAH, viii. 11-22.

The apostasy of the Jews was very aggravated, and its punishment was irremediable. The whole race seemed affected by it. Rulers, people, prophets, and priests, were all covetous, and false in their dealings. The ministers uttered smooth things, and the people were only too glad to have them cry, "Peace, peace." The cup was full at length. God forsook them, and their punishment was fearful. Are we yet unsaved? Alas! How often we have been warned and invited; and yet we are not in Christ. We cannot plead ignorance of the way of salvation, for we have had an open Bible, a faithful ministry, earnest Christian friends, all seeking to make the way plain. We have often felt the Spirit's power; he has wood us. We have had hopeful seasons, the summer and harvest; but they are gone, and we are unsaved. There is balm for your healing. The kind, skillful, successful Physician has been waiting at the door; but you did not ask him in. He has stood there until his locks were wet with the night dews; yet you moved no bolt, opened no door. *Will you ever be saved?* Why not now? Now ask him in, now believe and be saved. Delays are always dangerous, but especially so when the season of hope is so likely to end soon.

I suffered much for thee,
More than thy tongue can tell,
Of bitterest agony,
To rescue thee from hell;
I suffered much for thee;
What dost thou bear for me?

O, let thy life be given,
Thy years for me be spent,
World fetters all be riven,
And joy with suffering blent;
Give thou thyself to me,
And I will welcome thee!

1 Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.

2 And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

3 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks: neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil.

4 In that day shall one take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, and say, We be utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he hath divided our fields.

5 Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the Lord.

6 Prophesy ye not, say they to them that prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, that they shall not take shame.

7 O thou that art named The house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? are these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?

8 Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy: ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war.

9 The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.

10 Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.

11 If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people.

12 I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. *MICAH, ii. 1-12.*

In this selection, God charges upon his people covetousness, oppression, fraud, and violent practices; barbarous dealings with women and children and harmless persons; opposition to his prophets, and silencing them, while they delight in false teachers. For such sins as these, judgments are threatened, also impoverishment and banishment. Sin is a wicked thing in God's sight under any circumstances; but when it is deliberately planned and executed, it is greatly aggravated, and calls for his severest judgments. It is sure to secure them. He who lays his plans to do evil, and then goes carefully about it, may be sure that the eyes of a just God will follow him, and his curse will come upon him. God will not be trifled with, nor allow men to go on oppressing his poor, and trampling upon their rights, without bringing terrible judgments upon them in his good time. Nor can a people silence God's true servants, who rebuke their sins, and point out their duties, and secure those who prophesy smooth things, without arousing his indignation and wrath. We should remember, God is holy, therefore just. He will not overlook our sins, but will judge us according to our deeds. While he thus assures us that sin will be punished, he comforts his true people with the assurance that he will remember them with mercy and blessings.

L. M. How oft have sin and Satan strove
To rend my soul from thee, my God!
But everlasting is thy love,
And Jesus seals it with his blood.

The oath and promise of the Lord
Join to confirm his wondrous grace;
Eternal power performs the word,
And fills all heaven with endless praise.

14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;

16 And charged them that they should not make him known:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?

24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

MATTHEW, xii. 14-30.

Jesus was equal to every emergency, and had an answer for all inquirers. He could go to the bottom of any difficulty, and solve every problem. Strange that those who would rescue an animal from the ditch on the Sabbath, should question the lawfulness of healing on that day. Sin blinds the eyes, darkens the understanding, weakens perception, and destroys the reasoning faculty. Healing the withered hand by the word of his power, without any outward action, the miracle was made unquestionable, and all legal ground of objection was removed. This so maddened them, that from this time they plotted his death. The skill, wisdom, and power of the great Physician was most thoroughly tested. All kinds of sickness met at his feet; yet he was ready for every form in which disease manifested itself, and mastered every case. Fevers, madness, blindness, lameness, deafness, demons, all felt the power of his word, and obeyed his command. Everywhere he was victorious. Yet he was subjected to carping criticisms and most malicious words. His kindest acts were misinterpreted, and his gracious words wickedly perverted. The conflict between light and darkness, goodness and evil, still rages, and all must take part; those not for him are against him. Dear reader, where are you? Among the foes or the friends of Christ?

Ss & 7s. The great Physician now is near,
The sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks, the drooping heart to cheer,
O, hear the voice of Jesus!

Your many sins are all forgiven—
O, hear the voice of Jesus!
Go on your way in peace to heaven,
And wear a crown with Jesus.

1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

6 Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

ISAIAH, IV. 1-13.

The gracious work of Jesus opens the blessings of the gospel to the whole world. On this account its invitations embrace every one. All the spiritually needy, who vainly seek to satisfy their soul's wants elsewhere, are urged to come to Jesus. None are too poor, or sinful. The fountain is free to all, and the blood can cleanse the worst. Messiah is God's anointed one to bestow these great favors on all penitent, trusting seekers. Costly and unsatisfying are the attempts of men to find rest of soul outside of the gospel; but here is richness and freeness most wondrously combined. We wonder as we think of it, and confess, "Thy thoughts, O God, are exceedingly high; who can know them?" The plan of salvation is not more wondrous in its rich provisions and remarkable adaptations than in its certain success. God planned it, Jesus executed it, and the Holy Spirit is making it successful. The gospel feast will have its guests. If those first invited prove unworthy, the multitudes from the highways and the by-ways of sin will be sweetly forced by the gentle compellings of divine grace to enter while there is room. Why not come to the freely flowing fountain? Be persuaded to seek now while God is near, and can so easily be found.

L. M. Ho! every one that thirsts, draw nigh;
Thus God invites the fallen race;
Mercy and free salvation buy —
Buy wine and milk and gospel grace.

Come to the living waters, come;
Sinners, obey your Maker's call;
Return, ye weary wanderers, home,
And find my grace is free for all.

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What

manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.

MATTHEW, viii. 18-34.

What important lessons are here! The Creator of the universe had nowhere to lay his head. What strange humiliation! The owner of all the worlds to become so poor that he might save perishing men! How perfectly Jesus knew the human heart! Here was a superficial enthusiast ready to follow Jesus as he thought. But it was necessary he should count the cost, and consider the matter well. We need something besides fervor and good inclinations; we cannot become Christ's disciples unless we are willing to give up all for him. Nor will a spirit of procrastination do: the claims of Christ are above all others. We must be ready to let others perform the burial service, while we seek to save men from eternal death. With Christ in the vessel, they should have smiled at this fearful storm. If Jesus could not save us in the most terrible storms, he would not be the Saviour we need. But he is equal to all emergencies. Christ never slumbers. His eyes are ever on us. The billows shall not overflow us. He is the refuge in all storms. He is always near. What stupid selfishness is in the human heart? The Gergesenes would rather save their swine than have the presence of the Lord, with the healing power, among them.

8s & 7s. I will follow thee, my Saviour,
Whereso'er my lot may be;
Where thou goest I will follow,
Yes, my Lord, I'll follow thee.

Though the road be rough and thorny,
Trackless as the foaming sea,
Thou hast trod this way before me,
And I gladly follow thee.

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

5 Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

6 I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.

8 I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

9 Behold, the former things are come to

pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

10 Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedah doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.

12 Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands.

13 The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies.

14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman: I will destroy and devour at once.

15 I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

16 And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

ISAIAH, xlii. 1-16.

Matthew tells us that Jesus is the servant referred to by the prophet. Christ was truly "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel," and the "messenger of the covenant" through whom all people are blessed. Hence all nations are summoned to rejoice and give glory to God on account of his advent. He came for the express purpose of bringing salvation. It was a mission of mercy and peace; "noiseless as the light, gentle as the dew; but, like the light, giving life and joy; like the dew, giving beauty, fragrance, and refreshment." When he finds a heart bruised and crushed with earthly sorrows and sins, he does not break it by fearful judgments, but comforts and heals it with pardoning grace. When he finds faith and love, though it be but as a dimly burning wick of flax, he will not extinguish it, but will pour in the oil of mercy and grace, and cause it to brighten into a light-giving flame. "Eyes that have been blinded to the truth, he will open to the sunlight; souls that have been shut up in the darkness of guilt or despair, he will bring out into the free air of hope and peace." He is merciful to all sinners, and ready to heal them. But he will judge the earth by his true and holy law. He makes a just claim on our love, and deserves our willing and cheerful obedience.

Now the Saviour invites you to come,
And fly to the arms of his love;
In his kingdom of grace there is room,
And a mansion of glory above.

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To the faithful a promise is given,
Who meekly his counsel obey,
Of a crown of rejoicing in heaven,
And a treasure that fades not away.

1 And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

2 And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

3 And Joab answered, The Lord make his people a hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

4 Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

5 And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and a hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

6 But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

7 And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.

8 And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

9 And the Lord spake unto Gad, David's seer, saying,

10 Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

11 So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Choose thee

12 Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

13 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; let me fall now into the hand of the Lord; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.

1 CHRONICLES, xxi. 1-13.

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” A most suitable prayer for all people. Temptations come to men in all stations. Only God can deliver us. Israel had become great; pride was in the king's heart. He would like to know how vast an army he had. “Pride goeth before destruction.” Taking the census of a people is not wrong. But God had promised that Israel should be as the stars, or as the dust, for multitude; hence it was sin. Punishment quickly followed. David came under the rod, which alone can drive the foolishness of pride out of the heart. Every child whom he loves he chastens. God's people cannot sin without suffering for it. Pride is very displeasing to God, and nothing so quickly humbles a gracious soul as the consciousness of God's displeasure. David felt that it would be better to be in God's hands than men's. Human passions and vengeance know no bounds; but a gracious God regulates the extent of punishment according to the need. When God is said to *repent*, it is meant that he acts differently because of man's changed attitude toward him. We are all exposed to temptation, and liable to sin. It would often stay the correction if we penitently confessed our sin as soon as seen. We should ask God to punish us, and spare the innocent, while we cast ourselves on his mercy.

8s & 7s. When temptation's darts assail us,
When in devious paths we stray,
Let thy goodness never fail us,
Lead us in thy perfect way.

In the hour of pain and anguish,
In the hour when death draws near,
Suffer not our hearts to languish,
Suffer not our souls to fear.

10 Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

11 Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

12 Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

15 For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

16 O Lord our God, all this store that we

have prepared to build thee a house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.

17 I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

18 O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:

19 And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.

20 And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the Lord your God. And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and the king.

1 CHRONICLES, xxix. 10-20.

We should ponder well these words, for they are crowded with truth, and just that truth which men are very apt to forget. Greatness, power, glory, victory, majesty, riches, honor, all are God's. If we have any little portion thereof, it comes from him, and is lent us to be used for his glory. While God is so great, we are nothing; we are strangers on earth, fleeting like a shadow. David's life had as much of earthly good in it as any man's. He was great, good, and useful; had a long life, and lived to some purpose; and yet he speaks of himself as only a sojourner here. He had a very proper view of their offerings. What they had was God's free gift to them, and should be used for him. How prone men are to forget this! So also in spiritual things, every good thought, purpose, or work, comes of his grace; none are our own. "Let him that glories, glory in the Lord." David longs that God's grace might establish the integrity of Solomon and the people. He was sure that only God could keep them, so that their affections should not cool, and that his glory might ever be uppermost in their thoughts. This is a most suggestive prayer, and its spirit should pervade all our thoughts, and breathe in all our lives. God's glory should be the end and aim of our living.

L. M. Where shall we go to seek and find
A habitation for our God?

A dwelling for th' Eternal Mind
Among the sons of flesh and blood?

The God of Jacob chose the hill
Of Zion for his ancient rest;
And Zion is his dwelling still;
His church is with his presence blest.

Here will he meet the hungry poor,
And fill their souls with living bread;
Here sinners, waiting at his door,
With sweet provision shall be fed.

"Here will I fix my gracious throne,"
And reign forever," saith the Lord;
"Here shall my power and love be known,
And blessings shall attend my word."

2 Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised.

3 The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?

4 Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.

5 If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grape-gatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grapes?

6 How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up!

7 All the men of the confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee: there is none understanding in him.

8 Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?

9 And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

10 For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.

11 In the day that thou stoodest on the

other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them.

12 But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

13 Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity;

14 Neither shouldest thou have stood in the cross-way, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

15 For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

16 For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually; yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

17 But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

OBADIAH, 2-17.

The descendants of Esau should have showed kindness to the posterity of Jacob; but instead, they made common cause with Israel's foes, and were cruel instead of kind. For this continued unkindness God threatens a fearful destruction. Edom prided herself on her inaccessible fortresses; but God assures her that they shall be levelled; their hidden treasures shall be carried off; their allies shall deceive, disappoint, and injure them; and their boasted wisdom and strength shall fail them. Because of their cruelty to Israel in the day of his calamity, because they exulted over his sufferings, joined in spoiling his country, and treacherously slew his fugitives, their turn to suffer was come, and their punishment should have no end. Their suffering was to be made all the more severe, because better things were justly expected of them. What is the practical thought for us, dear reader? Surely this: "When we sin, who are the chosen favorites of heaven, we sin with an emphasis; ours is a crying offence, because we are so peculiarly indulged. Much forgiven, much delivered, much instructed, much enriched, much blessed, shall we dare to put forth our hand unto evil? God forbid." Our thought ever should be, How can I do this, and sin against a God so good, kind, and gracious?

Still the gentle voice within calls away,
As a warning I have heard o'er and o'er;
But my heart is melted now, I obey;
From my Saviour I will wander no more.

He has promised all my sins to forgive,
If I ask in simple faith for his love;
In his holy word I learn now to live,
And to labor for his kingdom above.

2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.

3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

6 Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men:

7 For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame.

9 Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself; and discover not a secret to another:

10 Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

12 As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reproof upon an obedient ear.

13 As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

PROVERBS, XXV. 2-13

God has no need to search into anything: he knows all things. Nothing can be hid from him. But his own way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters. His counsels have unfathomable depths; clouds and darkness are about him. We see what he does, but know not the reasons thereof. But it is man's duty to search carefully matters upon which he is to render judgment. Religion should teach us humility. We are not to thrust ourselves into places of honor, lest we be publicly degraded by being put out of them. It is far better to take an humble place, and be invited to a higher. Our Lord gives the same instruction, showing that humility is one of the cardinal virtues of the Christian. How wise is he who utters well-timed words! It was a custom in Solomon's day to make presents of the fragrant and beautiful citron, in a silver filigree vase. To such gifts he compares well-chosen words spoken at a fitting time. Who has not been comforted by an apt promise uttered when the heart was desolate? What strifes have been healed, and fears removed by wise words! How much trouble a pertinent reproof, administered in a Christian spirit, has saved! These proverbs are all mines of wisdom, which will bear the most careful study, and give rich rewards.

C. P. M.

O, could we speak the matchless worth,

O, could we sound the glories forth,

W^l ich in our Saviour shine,

We'd soar, and touch the heavenly strings,

And vie with Gabriel, while he sings,

In notes almost divine.

We'd sing the precious blood he spilt—
Our ransom from the dreadful guilt

Of sin and wrath divine;

We'd sing his glorious righteousness,

In which all-perfect, heavenly dress

We shall forever shine.

We'd sing the characters he bears,
And all the forms of love he wears,

Exalted on his throne:

In loftiest songs of sweetest praise,

We would, to everlasting days,

Make all his glories known.

Well, the delightful day will come,
When our dear Lord will bring us home,

And we shall see his face:

Then, with our Saviour, Brother, Friend,

A blest eternity we'll spend,

Triumphant in his grace.

14 Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.

15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

16 Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

17 Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbor's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.

18 A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

20 As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinctar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.

21 If thine enemy be hungry, give him

bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.

23 The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

24 It is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

25 As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

26 A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.

28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

PROVERBS, XXV. 14-28.

The high expectations and great promises of boasters are seldom realized. They are like morning clouds which give hope of rain for the refreshment of the thirsty earth, but quickly pass away, disappointing our expectations. It is much better to do our work quietly, raising no high hopes that will not be realized. Would you gain your enemy, be patient, wait for a fitting opportunity to offer your reasons, so that he may coolly consider them. Be mild also; speak without passion. "A soft tongue breaks the bone;" it soothes the roughest spirits. We need wisdom in the use of our friends' kindness, and should be moderate in our demands upon their time and patience. But it is not with God as with men. We cannot go to him too often, nor make too heavy drafts upon his bounty. His storhouse is always full; the provision of grace abundant; and he loves to give liberally. He tells us to open our mouths wide, and he will fill them. We are to ask great things of him, and expect that he will far exceed our asking. Are we so unfortunate as to have enemies, the best thing we can do is to give them both food and drink. We shall be most likely to gain them in this way, and we are certain of our reward, for God is responsible for it.

Speak a word for Jesus, brother,
'Twill thy heart inspire;
'Twill within thy soul enkindle
Love's enfeebled fire.

Speak a word to Jesus, sister,
Think what thou may'st do
For the souls that need, around you,
Christ the Lord to view.

Speak a word for Jesus, Christian;
Everywhere you'll find
Human souls so poor and needy,
Dark, and drear, and blind.

Tell them all the old, old story,
Make it clear and plain;
Show them how, in endless glory,
They with Christ may reign.

1 In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

5 For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.

6 The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.

7 The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I

seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

10 Let favor be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.

11 Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

12 Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

13 O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

14 They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth. *ISAIAH, xxvi. 1-15.*

Perfect peace! What a treasure! Who does not long for it? Israel learned, after a long and bitter experience, that peace comes from trusting in God. Why may not we accept it, and save the sorrowful experience? We are unhappy from want of peace. A disturbed mind sees nothing beautiful or useful in nature. Blue skies, a green earth, sublime mountains, majestic rivers, have no charm. We spend time, strength, treasure, to secure happiness, but find it not. It is peace of mind that makes happy: God alone can give it. He who made the mind can make peace for it. The peace which he gives is perfect, because holy and enduring. The mind must have something better and greater than itself to rest upon. He who trusts in the Lord has inward peace, outward peace, peace with God, with conscience, and with the world. Faith in God's love, wisdom, and faithfulness secures it. Have you this peace? We ought to drive the whole brood of doubts and fears out of our hearts, since they mar our comfort and destroy our peace. With the child of God, fears are groundless. Does distrust in a child grieve a loving parent? How ungenerous, unkind, and ungracious not to confide in God! Surely our unbelief is a grief to him. He never broke a promise: he never will! Trust in the Lord, and his peace will fill your soul. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you."

7s Thou hast bought me with thy blood,
Opened wide the gate of God:
Peace I ask—but peace must be,
Lord, in being one with thee.

May thy will, not mine, be done;
May thy will and mine be one;
Chase those doubtings from my heart,
Now thy perfect peace impart.

1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul.

3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers.

4 Then said Saul to his armor-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armor-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

5 And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.

6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.

7 And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people.

10 And they put his armor in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

11 And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

13 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it;

14 And inquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

1 SAMUEL, XXXI. 1-14.

The day of recompense had come. The cup of Saul's iniquity had been slowly filling, and God would bear with him no longer. Rejected for his disobedience, instead of repenting he added sin to sin. The Amalekites had been sinfully spared; God's priest had been wickedly slain; and David had been persecuted. God was dishonored; his altars forsaken. See the righteous judgment of God. Saul's army was routed, his three sons slain, himself dying by his own hand. His armor-bearer also committed suicide, and his men were slain. His country was possessed by the Philistines, his camp plundered, his body mutilated and with difficulty rescued by his friends. Thus it befell the man whom God rejected. What lessons are here! Men rarely begin a public career under better auspices. The people had received him favorably, and God blessed him. But he disobeyed God's express command, and went from one step in sin to another, till the end was reached. Thus it is with the way of the sinner. We must beware of the first act of disobedience, as it opens the door for the ingress of all kinds of wickedness. There is nothing for us but simple, positive obedience to all God's commands. They may seem hard to us; but that is not our concern. Obedience is our only safe course. Sin brings death and eternal ruin.

He asks from me but small return,
An humble, trustful heart,
That shall in him all grace discern,
And from him ne'er depart.

My soul, redeemed, to him belongs;
It shall to him be given;
And when life ends, I'll sing the songs
The angels sing in heaven.

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If, ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

LUKE, xii. 22-40.

What sweet words are these! Wondrously calculated to calm our fears and anxieties, and soothe the troubled breast. Here is no contradiction to other scriptures which tell us to be not "slothful in business," as well as "fervent in spirit," in both, "serving the Lord." But Jesus would not have us troubled with *anxious care*. He would have us trust our heavenly Father, and devote ourselves to his will. If we are his children, under his loving care, the goodness that clothes the flowers and feeds the birds will provide for our necessities. Let us meditate upon these precious truths; they are the words of our elder Brother, our Saviour. He spoke them to keep us from being agitated and tossed betweeen hope and fear. He knows our Father's will, and says it is his good pleasure to give to his people the kingdom, even though they are few, and weak, and poor. It is God's fixed purpose to give it to every self-denying, heavenly-minded, diligent, and watchful servant. If we are only careful to lay up treasure in heaven, and are constantly on the watch for our Lord, we shall be richly rewarded. We ought to take these words home to our hearts. They are the precious legacy of our Saviour, and it is our own folly if we are not calmed, comforted, encouraged, and rejoiced by them.

Jesus, am I near to thee?
Then, no more delaying,
I must in the vineyard be,
Watching, working, praying.

44

Near to Jesus all the time,
He will leave me never;
I am his, and he is mine,
I am safe forever.

1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

4 And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee.

5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

6 And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

7 And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

9 Let thine eyes be on the field, that they

do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art at first, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

10 Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

12 The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

13 Then she said, Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

14 And Boaz said unto her, At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

RUTH, ii. 1-14.

God directs the steps of those who trust in him. To Ruth it seemed all accidental that she should go to glean in the field of Boaz; yet we cannot question that an invisible hand led her thither. God was about to reward the filial piety of this trusting woman, and directed her to the field where she found a husband, wealth, and great honor. What seem to us as little, insignificant matters of daily life, often involve momentous consequences. Every Christian should be a gleaner; and if we are led into the field where Jesus can behold our patient toil, it will be blessed indeed. He will see that some handfuls are left for us, and will cause us to sit at his table where the fare will be both rich and abundant. No guest ever need go away hungry from his table. Head, heart, hope, desire, conscience, judgment, imaginations, all will be fed. Gleaners need much patience, taking what they can find, ear by ear. So we gain gospel truths. It is necessary also to keep eyes and ears open, lest we miss some of the most precious truths. We must not be high-minded, but humble, and willing to bend to our task. Where hast thou gleaned, and what hast thou to show as the reward of your toil? We need to be careful that we keep what we gather, if we would have a rich store.

If upon the towering mountain
Thou canst find no place to toil,
Seek it in the lowly valley,
Where the dews enrich the soil.

If thou canst not with the reapers
Gather in the bearded sheaves,
Go and glean where they have trodden
Golden grain among the leaves.

4 And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.

5 And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his cloths, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

9 So Naaman came with his horses and

with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

10 And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

11 But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

2 KINGS, v. 4-14.

Israel found Syria a dangerous neighbor. Predatory bands frequently crossed the border and carried off victims, who were made slaves. We see here how God can bring good out of evil, and promote his glory and man's salvation in most unexpected ways. Naaman's heart was very proud and needed humbling. The prophet saw it, and took the sure course to accomplish it. Health was not to be purchased with money or large presents; he could secure it only by faith. Every step in the process of healing was one of great humility. "A captive maid-servant told him of Elisha. When he stood with his chariot at the prophet's door, Elisha did not even come out to see him, but sent a servant; and his own servant brought him to reason. Seven times, too, he must wash in Jordan; but when he was willing to do that, he was made clean." When his heart was sufficiently humbled, his body was quickly purified. Pride and unbelief are the greatest hinderances to salvation. If a man could only do some wonderful thing to merit salvation or purchase it, he thinks he would gladly do it. But it is the gift of God, and must be received in a child-like spirit of humility and trust. Take it with a rejoicing heart, for, though it is a gift to us, it cost God an infinite sum.

C. M. Wash me, and make me thus thine own;
Wash me, and mine thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,
My hands, my head, my heart.

The atonement of thy blood apply,
Till faith to sight improve;
Till hope in full fruition die,
And all my soul be love.

1 For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

5 For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence,

7 And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

8 The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast labored:

9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

10 Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

11 Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

12 And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not for saken.

ISAIAH, lxii. 1-12

The prophet was sent to comfort God's people. In doing so he pictured the bright and glorious reign of Messiah; he told them of Jesus and what he would do for his people. It is difficult for us to take in the fullness of the blessings here set forth. She was to have a new name corresponding to her condition; a true name, because chosen of the Lord. When God holds his people as a crown of glory in his hand, as a royal diadem, it must be because of his delight. What can we think of, equal to having God delight in us, and rejoice over us? Surely it must be because his grace has wrought some great change in us. What can we not expect when God delights in us? Our desires may be boundless, but his blessings will exceed them all. When the way of the Lord is prepared, then will he declare to Zion, "Thy salvation cometh." The Saviour never comes without bringing his hands full of blessings for the people of his love; presents for his bride. They are a holy people, for his blood cleansed them from all sin. A redeemed people, for he has purchased them with his blood. Their name is "Sought out." A very proper name for every disciple of Christ, for he sought us out.

Ss & 7s. By thy hand sustained, defended,
Safe through life, thus far, I've come;
Safely, Lord, when life is ended,
Bring me to my heavenly home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood.

O, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart; O, take and seal it;
Seal it from thy courts above.

1 Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

3 For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4 Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

5 My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7 Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9 Awake, awake; put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

10 Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

11 Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

12 I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

13 And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?

14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

15 But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: the Lord of hosts is his name.

16 And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.

ISAIAH, li. 1-16

God began with one man and made a great nation of Israel. His power is still unlimited, and his grace none can measure. He is the God of the humble and trusting still, and will take care of his church, and of each child of his. For their encouragement he has scattered promises rich and full all through his Book. He is the God of comfort, and abounds in all grace. Many a church, through the sin of its members, has been made a waste place, a wilderness even; but the grace of God has changed it to a paradise, where many flowers and fruits of grace have grown to beauty and maturity. The same is true of many individual Christians. Where sin once abounded, grace much more abounds. Sin can make any heart desolate; but God's grace can cause all fruits to abound again. We journey through a wilderness of sin, but God can make a way for us through the desert. He will not leave any child of his, but, causing him to triumph over sin, he will crown him with glory, honor, and immortality, and make him an heir of all things. Who would fail to be in the service of such a God? Reader, make sure of your adoption into the Divine family. Great treasures are in store for such.

L. M. From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat;
'Tis found before the mercy-seat.

There is a place where Jesus shed
The oil of gladness on our heads—
A place of all on earth most sweet;
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid.

9 Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary

Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. MARK, xvi. 1-18

The believer must ever read the evidences of Christ's resurrection with a tender and deep interest, for "if Christ be not risen, then is our faith vain." How gladly, therefore, do we follow the footsteps of these women, and rejoice in the certainty that he was not in that sepulchre, but had risen. It is no matter of surprise that their anxious hearts were questioning how that heavy stone was to be rolled away. How often in our experience have we felt and said the same, and found to our joy, as they did to theirs, that it was moved away before we reached it! We may have many fears, but if we go trustingly and lovingly to honor Jesus in our chosen duties, he will remove all our fears. We may go to anoint him, but he will give us better work, even messages of love to his sorrowful ones. It seems most fitting that Mary should have been the chosen one to whom Jesus should first appear. She had left all to become his constant attendant; he was the first and chief object of her care and love. She bore the cross; she ministered of her substance; she was last at the cross; she was first at the sepulchre. We must abide close by the bleeding heart of Jesus if we would receive the most blessed assurance of his love.

S. M. The Lord is risen indeed;

The grave hath lost its prey;
With him shall rise the ransomed seed,
To reign in endless day.

The Lord is risen indeed;

He lives to die no more;
He lives, his people's cause to plead,
Whose curse and shame he bore.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have

put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 CORINTHIANS, xv. 50-58

The apostle had finished his masterly argument; but he had something especially important to add. This entire change is certain because it is absolutely necessary; for human nature in its present state, composed of flesh and blood, and hence corruptible, cannot enter the state of eternal glory. When this great change shall have taken place, mortality shall have put on immortality. then shall the predictions of the life-giving blessings of the gospel have a more illustrious and perfect fulfillment. Then will be a victory over death and the grave. The captives whom death has taken will not be found in his domains. They will be in the mansions where death cannot enter. Jesus, God's own Son, dead once on Calvary, will stand at the right hand of the majesty on high. About him all his saints, the noble, the beautiful, the virtuous, redeemed from earth, shall dwell together clothed in spotless robes, exempt from pain and sorrow, exultant over death, the grave, and all earthly ills. Through Christ, the conquered have become the conquerors, and now wear the beautiful crown of life. O, what thanks will be due to Jesus for such a grand, glorious victory! We may well be exhorted to steadfastness and abundant labors in the Lord; for though we die, our labors for Christ are sure to be graciously rewarded at the resurrection of the just.

8s & 7s.

When we pass through yonder river,
When we reach the farther shore,
There's an end of war forever,
We shall see our foes no more;
All our conflicts then shall cease,
Followed by eternal peace.

After warfare, rest is pleasant:
O, how sweet the prospect is!
Though we toil and strive at present,
Let us not repine at this:
Toil, and pain, and conflict past,
All endear repose at last.

When we gain the heavenly regions,
When we touch the heavenly shore, —
Blessed thought! — no hostile legions
Can alarm or trouble more:
Far beyond the reach of foes,
We shall dwell in sweet repose.

O, that hope! how bright, how glorious!
"Tis his people's blest reward;
In the Saviour's strength victorious,
They at length behold their Lord.
In his kingdom they shall rest,
In his love be fully blest.

14 Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods;

17 For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way where we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the Lord drove out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the Lord.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord.

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

JOSHUA, xxiv. 14-27.

Joshua possessed rare abilities. He was a remarkable leader in war, and a sagacious administrator of civil affairs. He had also the moral courage to confess his dependence on God, and to inculcate virtue and religion by precept and example. He had no ambition to be king after he had secured the peaceable establishment of his people in their own promised land, but laid aside his authority and bound his people by a covenant to obedience to the law and will of God. Religion is a matter of choice. God will not force it upon any one. He sets good and evil, life and death, before every one, and then says, "Choose ye." He opens our eyes that we may see where our best interests lie; he urges us with all suitable motives to wise choosing, but leaves every man to say whom he will serve, God or self. He even goes further than this: he sets before us the difficulties we shall meet with in living a holy life. When Joshua said to the people, "Ye cannot serve God," he meant to call attention to the fact that fidelity to God could be maintained only with great difficulty. So our Saviour clearly taught that his followers would have a cross-bearing life, would meet with many obstacles, and that only a positive will aided by divine grace would enable one to overcome. These things were not said to discourage zeal or excuse backsliding, but to incite watchfulness and trust.

I. M. 'Tis to my Saviour I would live,
To him who for my ransom died;
Nor could all worldly honor give
Such bliss as crowns me at his side.

His work my hoary age shall bless,
When youthful vigor is no more,
And my last hour of life confess
His saving love, his glorious power.

1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

4 For lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

5 They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.

6 Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of

our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

10 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

PSALMS, xlvi. 1-14.

Zion was most beautiful for situation; but its real glory was, that it was God's abode. Its name is "The Lord is there," and they emphasize the thought that the Lord is great *in Zion*. Because there God dwells and his praise is sung, she is the joy of the whole earth. God's presence ennobles her and makes her fair, comely, and beautiful. How beautifully the story of the deliverance is told, and yet not told! We get no view of the way this deliverance was wrought, but there is left the impression that God had brought some panic upon them, — that "he blew upon them and they were scattered." We do not wonder that a grateful song was poured forth at the remembrance of this event. As they meditated, their hearts burned within them, and they rejoiced in his loving-kindness. It would also spread abroad his praise unto the ends of the earth; it would make his name known. This so corresponds with his character, that all knowing him would worship and love him. God only needs to be known in order to be loved. It is ignorance of him that makes men hide away from him. How great, then, is the obligation of every one who knows God to declare his name and publish his works! Every believer has daily deliverances for which to praise God.

6s & 4s. Glory to God on high!

Let heaven and earth reply;
Praise ye his name;
His love and grace adore,
Who all our sorrows bore,
And sing for evermore,
"Worthy the Lamb!"

Ye who surround the throne,
Join cheerfully in one,
Praising his name:
Ye who have felt his blood
Sealing your peace with God,
Sound his dear name abroad, —
"Worthy the Lamb!"

Join, all ye ransomed race,
Our Lord and God to bless;

Praise ye his name;
In him we will rejoice,
And make a joyful noise,
Shouting with heart and voice,
"Worthy the Lamb!"

Soon must we change our place;
Yet will we never cease
Praising his name:
To him our songs we'll bring,
Hail him our gracious King,
And through all ages sing,
"Worthy the Lamb!"

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any

of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. 1 THESSALONIANS, ii. 1-16.

The apostle's heart yearned toward the children whom he had begotten in the Lord. In this selection he reminds them of the nature of his ministry among them, while he tells them what joy their fidelity and constancy in the midst of persecution has given him. Paul could well exhort us to follow him, as he followed Christ; and in his conduct as a minister and a brother he is a most remarkable example of what we all should strive to be. He was *true*, loyal to Christ everywhere, always. His Lord's will was his single rule of duty; he acknowledged no other. This made him *bold* in God to declare the whole counsel, to point out the folly of trusting in the letter of the law when men knew nothing of the spirit, and to preach faith in Christ as the only hope of lost men. It made him *gentle*. We are apt to form erroneous ideas of the apostle while we think of him as the bold, uncompromising champion of the doctrine of justification by faith. He was gentle. As a mother cherisheth her own children, so he fondly loved his brethren, and was willing, not only to give them the gospel, but himself also. This made him careful against being burdensome. Is there anything that can so transform men of many minds and varying tastes, and so bind them together, as Christ's love shed abroad in the heart?

I love to tell the story:
More wonderful it seems
Than all the golden fancies
Of all our golden dreams.

I love to tell the story,
For some have never heard
The message of salvation
From God's own holy word.

1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

7 Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

PSALMS, xxxii. 1-11.

What a source of unhappiness is concealed sin, as many beside David have learned! As no concealment can hide sin from him who alone gives prosperity, "he that covereth his sin shall not prosper," nor will he find peace. He may have bitter grief; it may show itself in his body, "his bones waxing old; his moisture be turned into the drought of summer," but he finds no peace until hearty confession is made to God. Confession is hard for most persons. They will fashion excuses, seek to divert the thoughts, but they are only the more filled with grief. But when humble confession is made, all obstructions are removed; the tokens of forgiveness are granted; broken bones rejoice; and songs of deliverance rise. If we are covering any sin, which certainly will destroy our peace and joy, how does all experience, voiced by David from his own, speak of the way to find lost happiness! Concealment will not do. The disobedient child finds no joy until it has sobbed out its confession at the mother's knee; no more can the child of God, till acknowledgment is made. When confession is made, how sweet our Father's voice, "All is forgiven;" how blessed Jesus' words, "Go in peace;" how comforting the entrance of the Spirit! "How blessed is a grace-wrought confession!" It finds God ready to pardon; secures all the delights of forgiveness. All this experience may be yours on easy terms.

S. M. Yet mercy calls, Return;
Saviour, to thee I come;
My vile ingratitude I mourn,
O, take the wanderer home!

Thy love, so free, so sweet,
Blest Saviour, I adore;
O, keep me at thy sacred feet,
And let me rove no more!

Blest Saviour, Lord of all,
Thee help us to receive;
Obedient to thy gracious call,
O, bid us turn and live.

Our former years misspent
Now let us deeply mourn,
And, softened by thy grace, repent.
And to thine arms return.

16 For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.

17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labor wherein I have labored, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labor which I took under the sun.

21 For there is a man whose labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity;

yet to a man that hath not labored therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.

22 For what hath man of all his labor, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath labored under the sun?

23 For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24 There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.

25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I?

26 For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit. *ECCLESIASTES*, ii. 16-26.

Tired of sensuality and luxury, and well satisfied that true and lasting happiness was not to be found in them, Solomon turned to business. He gave his whole attention to the management of his kingdom and public works of various kinds; but he soon found this wearisome; he was disgusted with it, hated it. What troubled him greatly was, that he must soon leave it to his successor, who might be a fool. One generation gathers for another to spend. Wise men have pleasure in their business. They get weary in it, but not of it. Surely here, if anywhere, happiness is to be found. Yet it is not here. There is satisfaction in success; but how many wise, careful, prudent men, who have spent a lifetime in amassing a fortune, find their last days full of bitterness because it must be left to spendthrift sons! What has he of all his toil and hardships? Solomon comes to the conclusion that the best use one can make of wealth is to use it cheerfully, take what comfort you can with it, and especially do what good you can by its use. This is the only way to have wealth prove a real blessing. He who gives cheerfully and liberally secures a double blessing. With God's blessing on a little we may be far more happy than multitudes who have great wealth, but have not God's smile.

Follow the paths of Jesus,
Walk where his footsteps lead,
Keep in his beaming presence,
Every counsel heed;
Watch, while the hours are flying,
Ready some good to do;
Quick, while his voice is calling,
Yield obedience true!

Cling to the hand of Jesus,
All through the day and night;
Dark though the way, and dreary,
He will guide you right.
Live for the good of others,
Helpless, oppressed, and wrong;
Lift them from depths of sorrow,
In his strength be strong!

5 Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

10 I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

11 As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the

midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

12 A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.

13 O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters.

14 Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.

15 Behold, they say unto me, Where is the word of the Lord? let it come now.

16 As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee.

17 Be not a terror unto me: thou art my hope in the day of evil.

18 Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction.

JEREMIAH, xvii. 5-18.

The prophet here shows man's *blessedness* directly and in contrast. We see a marked progression in wickedness: first, occasional conformity to the practices of sinners; then constant association with them; and finally haughty and presumptuous profanity. Alas, that we must see this illustrated often! "Many a young man, who begins by yielding to the solicitations of irreligious companions to throw off the outward restraints of religion, ends in habits of profaneness and vice that shock the very deceiver of life; but in the midst of his reckless career he may be driven away like chaff to receive the judgment of his deeds." The sure safeguard against a life so wasteful, vain, and destructive is to make God's word the companion, the counsellor, the guide of the soul. He who does this will be like the fruit-tree by the watercourse, always fresh and flourishing, and yielding ripe and delicious fruit in the season. The roots of such a life will find healthful nourishment, and the vigor and beauty of its piety will be seen of all. Peace of conscience, satisfaction of soul, and the approval of God, will make any man blessed. The life which is planted in the life of God cannot be disturbed by the world.

C. M. Alas! what hourly dangers rise!

What snares beset my way!

To heaven, O, let me lift mine eyes,
And hourly watch and pray.

Increase my faith, increase my hope,
When foes and fears prevail;
O, bear my fainting spirit up,
Or soon my strength will fail.

Whene'er temptations lure my heart,

Or draw my feet aside,
My God, thy powerful aid impart,

My Guardian and my Guide.

O, keep me in thy heavenly way,
And bid the tempter flee;
And let me never, never stray
From happiness and thee.

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man a gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

MATTHEW, xi. 2-19.

John longed to have Jesus proclaim himself the Messiah; hence his embassy. Jesus points to his works and words as the most positive proofs that he was the Christ. The miracles of Christ were his credentials, infinitely better than parchments, telling whence he came and who he was. Best of all, he preached the gospel to the poor. John could but know that this was one of the special, prophetic designations of the Messiah. The greatest of all blessings is the privilege of hearing the gospel. Does our faith ever wane? See what Jesus is doing; how he lengthens out the catalogue of mighty works by daily saving those who are spiritually blind, deaf, lame, and dead in trespasses. Have you not the witness within, better than all outward signs, of the power of his saving grace? These are Christ's proofs. Jesus honors John, proclaiming him his herald. He confesses himself the Christ. If John was the messenger sent before, he was the Messiah. "The world praises a man in his presence, blames him in his absence. Divine truth does the contrary." The reproof of Jesus was well merited. He would not conform to false standards. His gospel takes men as it finds them, and enters into their daily life. "The true Christian spirit will not compromise with sin, nor court the world; yet it is full of mercy and good fruits."

L. M. My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, his covenant, and blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast,
call a solemn assembly:

16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

17 Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

18 Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

19 Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:

20 But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things.

21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things.

22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for

the pastures of the wilderness do spring; for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength.

23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I sent among you.

26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.

JOEL, ii. 15-29.

God had often to call Israel to repentance. They were stiff-necked, disobedient, prone to idolatry and all kindred sins. Hence we find so many reproofs, warnings, threatenings, as well as the most gracious, glorious promises. He does not leave his people to sin ignorantly; but if they will hear his voice, they may know what is displeasing to him, and be strengthened against the hour of temptation. They know well the consequences of sin, for he has plainly declared them,—loss of peace, joy, happiness; coming of sorrow, trouble, afflictions, death. We know these things; we know the consequences of disobedience. God is clear, though we suffer and die. Yet how gracious he is when we humble ourselves before him, and repent and forsake our sins, turning to him! How ready to meet the penitent prodigal when a great way off, giving him the heartiest, welcome, and the clearest proofs of unceasing love! God's Spirit has always been with his Church, but he promised that in the gospel dispensation it should be much more wondrously poured on the people. Pentecost witnessed a most gracious fulfillment of this promise, according to Peter's express declaration. But all these centuries of Christianity have had remarkable displays of the Spirit's power. Never more than in these latter years. We may hope, in answer to the prayers of his people, more wondrous things are yet to be seen and felt.

C. M. Thy word is to my feet a lamp,
The way of truth to show;
A watch-light, to point out the path
In which I ought to go.

Thy testimonies I have made
My heritage and choice;
For they, when other comforts fail,
My drooping heart rejoice.

1 The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

2 For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

7 For many deceivers are entered into the

world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

12 Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

2 JOHN, 1-13.

Where truth and love dwell, divine grace, mercy, and peace will be enjoyed. The apostle's love was not only sincere, but was for the truth's sake. This letter was written for the purpose of emphasizing the need of our dwelling in the truth and the truth in us. Heresies were multiplying; and this only surviving apostle used his voice and pen to confirm every believer in the great truth of Christ's advent and atoning work. When we have received this truth, and we are completely subdued unto it, nothing can take it away. How precious is the assurance that the truth will dwell with us forever! "It will be our living support, our dying comfort, our rising song, our eternal glory." What a privilege has the Christian in this! We cannot outgrow this truth; it is our delicious food in the beginning, and the strong meat adapted to us when we reach maturity. Do we see the evidences of this truth abiding in others, we are apt to love them for its sake. We cannot confine our gracious sympathies to any narrow circle. Our love must embrace every one who walks in the truth and in whom it dwells; withdrawing ourselves from every one who rejects Christ, and be intimate companions of those who love him.

C. M. O that the Lord would guide my ways,
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace,
To know and do his will!

O, send thy Spirit down, to write
Thy law upon my heart;
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,
Nor act the liar's part.

From folly turn away my eyes;
Let no corrupt design,
Nor covetous desire, arise
Within this soul of mine.

Direct my footsteps by thy word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear.

1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in

heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

MATTHEW, xviii. 1-18.

The disciples were full of ambitious notions, and our Saviour took a very characteristic way to teach them the necessity of humility if they would become great in his kingdom. There must be childlike "simplicity, freedom from guile, candor, trust." These things are common in children, and are important elements of a Christian's character. We are to feel and act toward God just as a loving, obedient child acts toward its parents. We are especially to be careful about injuring, morally or spiritually, a child. Better for us to suffer maiming of the severest kind than to pollute the mind of a young child. God greatly loves his humble children; he jealously watches over them, and will permit no harm to be done them. He sent his Son to save them, and rejoices greatly over their recovery. Not one that trusts him will he permit to be lost. If one of his flock strays, he lovingly follows it, and gently brings it back. If God thus loves his people, how ought we to love them, to rejoice in their prosperity, helping them in every possible way! This spirit of humility will make us forgiving and tender; it will lead us to seek reconciliation, and keep us from asking the interference of the church until we have exhausted all reasonable efforts. The whole aim of the gospel is to make us Christ-like.

S. M. I was a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold;
I did not love my Father's voice,
I would not be controlled.

46

They found me nigh to death,
Famished, and faint, and lone;
They bound me with the bands of love.
They saved the wan'ering one.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him a hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

MATTHEW, xviii. 19-35.

How rich the promises of God! They hang on no hard conditions. It is easy for two to be agreed. It ought not to be difficult to get them together for the purpose of honoring Christ and his revealed perfections and offices. Such have this promise-key to God's storehouse, and may help themselves to all they need. Are you poor, needy? Unite with others to glorify God by a loving, hearty service, and you may be sure of his blessing, which maketh rich. Peter's seven was a large number, but was limited. The answer of Christ was evidently designed to take away all limits. The sins which God forgives us are incalculably more and greater than we are ever called to forgive others. Ten thousand talents was a great sum, representing the exceeding greatness of our debt to God. The hundred pence was a very insignificant amount compared with the other, yet aptly represents the trifling offences committed against us compared with our sins against God. We cannot read this parable without feeling that the unjust servant was rightly dealt with. He deserved his punishment for his ingratitude toward his master, for his selfish greed, for his hard-hearted cruelty toward his fellow-servant. We owe God everything; we have nothing to pay. He willingly forgives all. Such forgiveness should produce in us gentleness, forbearance, and forgiveness toward our fellow-men.

7s & 6s. We stand in deep repentance
Before thy throne of love:
O God of grace, forgive us,
The stain of guilt remove;
Behold us while with weeping
We lift our eyes to thee;
And, all our sins subduing,
Our Father, set us free!

Our souls, on thee we cast them,
Our only refuge thou!
Thy cheering words revive us,
When pressed with grief we bow:
Thou bear'st the trusting spirit
Upon thy loving breast,
And givest all thy ransomed
A sweet, unending rest.

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women;)

15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

ACTS, v. 1-15.

A deliberate falsehood, planned and agreed upon by both. A great revival of religion is very likely to develop cases of hypocrisy. No sin is more odious than covetousness. This man and wife wanted to share in the reputation of good works; but they were greedy of their treasures, and by it were betrayed into hypocrisy. They would be thought disinterested whilst they were guarding their own interests, and to seem to be like Barnabas filled with the Holy Spirit, when they had allowed Satan to fill their hearts. It was very necessary that the infant church should be freed from all taint of worldliness and hypocrisy; hence this awful judgment. Lying unto men is very wicked; but lying unto God is infinitely worse. How many are guilty of it! All unfaithfulness, all untruthfulness, is such lying. What if the Searcher of hearts should now go through the church with a like test! how many dead persons there would be! It is not simply keeping back money that belongs to the Lord, though this is bad enough; but every professed child of God says, His glory shall be the chief thought and pursuit of my life. Alas, how many are lying to God in this way, and are the veriest hypocrites before their fellow-men! O, be true to thyself, thy fellow-men, thy God! Remember nothing can be hid from him who searches the heart and tries the reins.

6s & 4s. Weary of earthly care,
Jesus, my Lord,
I want thy love to share,
Trust in thy Word.
Come, Saviour, from above,
Take to thine arms of love,
And from my soul remove
Each sinful stain.

Wash me and make me clean—
Pure as thou art;
Each root and seed of sin
Take from my heart;
Make me, in thought and word,
Like unto thee, my Lord;
Then be thy grace adored
For evermore.

15 And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one target.

16 And three hundred shields made he of beaten gold: three hundred shekels of gold went to one shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

17 Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

18 And there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and stays on each side of the sitting-place, and two lions standing by the stays:

19 And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

20 And all the drinking-vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: none were of silver; it was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

21 For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

22 And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.

24 And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

25 And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

26 And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

2 CHRONICLES, ix. 15-26.

Solomon had wisely chosen, and God so approved his choice as to promise that he should have riches and honor also. We have here abundant proof that God will not break his promises. The wisdom, wealth, and fame bestowed upon him were beyond the conception of man. So shall it be with those whom God delights to honor. The splendor of Solomon's kingdom, prosperity, and glory is but a faint type of the glorious reign of David's greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Was it something desirable to live at such a time, under such a king? What was it compared to being a subject of the King of kings, whose scepter sways the universe, whose throne is in the heavens, and who makes the earth, with all its treasures, his footstool? Happy people! Dear reader, are you one of them? How blest! You may have little of earth's treasure, but you are an heir of immortal glory, and you will soon be taken to another part of the King's country, and be exalted to your true position, and enriched with his treasures. God promised long life to Solomon, conditionally, but he forfeited it by not walking in the Lord's ways, and forgetting his commandments; so that before he reached his sixtieth year he left his famous throne for the sepulchre. Death will soon summon us from all our earthly wealth and fame. Blessed shall we be if, when absent from the body, we are present with the Lord.

11s.

An alien from God, and a stranger to grace,
I wandered through earth, its gay pleasures
to trace;

In the pathway of sin I continued to roam,
Unmindful, alas! that it led me from home.

CHORUS. — Home, home, &c.

Allure me no longer, ye false glowing charms!
The Saviour invites me, I'll go to his arms;
At the banquet of mercy I hear there is room,
O there may I feast with his children at home.

CHORUS. — Home, home, &c.

1 And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

2 And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

3 Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

4 But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

5 And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

6 And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

7 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

8 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from

moⁿ of Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the Lord, that was before the porch of the Lord.

9 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.

10 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

11 And they offered unto the Lord the same time, of the spot which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

12 And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul;

13 That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

14 And they swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.

15 And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about. 2 CHRONICLES, xv. 1-15.

Asa and his army were returning from a great victory which God had given them. We may well believe that the king was meditating what return he should make to God for so graciously regarding his prayer. The Lord is always ready to instruct us when we are in an inquiring state. So Azariah came to the king. The sermon was brief and pointed, and the application was easy to make. God is not hard to find. He is with his people always, when they are in spirit with him; he never forsakes them until they forsake him. This is truth for all time: for nations, for individuals, for you, dear reader. God will not leave you unless by sin you force him to do so. We should do God's work with strong, brave hearts, being confident of our reward. God never lets any one work for him without pay. He pays as we go, and gives a great reward when the earthly work is done. Having given to God liberally of the spoil he had given them, and put away idolatry, they cheerfully entered into a solemn covenant with him. They bound themselves with an oath, loudly spoken, that they would render God a whole-hearted service. We should not be afraid to have it known that we are God's people, but should be brave and bold in our utterances, and faithful in keeping our vows.

That gate ajar stands free for all
Who seek through it salvation;
The rich and poor, the great and small,
Of every tribe and nation.

REF.—O, depths of mercy, &c.

Press onward, then, though foes may frown,
While mercy's gate is open;
Accept the cross, and win the crown,
Love's everlasting token.

REF.—O, depths of mercy, &c.

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word:

for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

MATTHEW, ii. 1, 2, 10-18.

Jesus was born; born like ourselves; born a little babe; born, I suppose, in a very nice, clean stable. Centuries before his birth, prophets had announced that the government should be upon his shoulders, and his name be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. All heaven was stirred at his birth. Multitudes of angelic singers cried, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." A new star was hung out in the heavens in honor of this wonderful babe; this star leading the wise men to the spot where the young child was. How proper, then, as custom suggests, that to-day we celebrate his advent into this world. Shall we not imitate the wise men, and make presents to Jesus? Let us make a Christmas present of *ourselves* to him. O how suitable! Who can do less? Shall not our faith clasp this child to our bosom, and our warmest love, like Mary's, imprint its kisses on his feet? Let nothing be wanting in our love to Jesus to-day. Let this be to us a "Merry Christmas" indeed, because all our hearts are so full of love to Christ. Let us join our brethren angels from heaven and sing, "Glory to God in the highest." Well may earth rejoice; well may all men cease their labors to celebrate "the great birthday of Jesus."

11s & 10s.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine
aid;

Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
Guide where the infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies his bed with the heasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumber reclining,
Maker, and Monarch, and Saviour of all.

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Eden and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the
mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching:

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Ab-

hor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

ROMANS, xii. 1-21.

It is important that every Christian keep before himself a high ideal of excellence. He never will rise above what he has in his own mind; hence the importance of perfect examples. In our selection we have a high standard; and practicing the precepts here given us, we may make great advancement in the divine life. God does not now ask of us lambs or bullocks. He wants something better. He would have us put our whole being—body, soul, and spirit—on his altar, devoting all to the fulfillment of his will. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, and he must have a consecrated dwelling-place. The whole being must be rationally devoted to that holy, acceptable worship, which springs from the renewing of the mind. The Christian should not desire barely to enter heaven, as the shipwrecked mariner gains the port, with everything gone, but he must be transformed by the renewing of his mind, and not conformed to this world. In the world, but not of it, must his motto ever be. He must away with mere worldly ambitions if he would make great attainments, and know something of heights and depths of experience in God's grace. How do you wish to enter port, with full sail and a full cargo, or barely to get in? This is left with you to decide.

8s & 7s. Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe,
It will joy and comfort give you;
Take it, then, where'er you go.

Take the name of Jesus ever,
As a shield from every snare;
If temptations round you gather,
Breathe that holy name in prayer.

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you, who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 THESS. i. 1-12.

The apostle's heart was full of thankfulness and joy because his brethren were growing in faith and love. They were persecuted and remained steadfast, and this added to his rejoicing. He comforts them in the assurance, that when Christ comes they shall be recompensed for all their sufferings, and rewarded for their faithfulness. There is a day coming, "which will be so grand and decisive in its manifestation of the glory of God, that forever after it shall be known as *that day*." The great events of that day will be impressed on the universe. It is the day of judgment. Christ will come in glory and power, with legions of angels. His displeasure will be visited upon all the unbelieving. They will be forever banished from him whose presence alone can make the glory and bliss of heaven. But those who believe in Christ and obey him, will go to share his glory and triumph; for them it will not be a day of terror, but one of inexpressible peace and unmeasured joy. For trouble, they shall have rest; for sorrow, joy; for affliction, glory. It matters not when this day comes. It may be near; but we certainly know the day of our departure is not far away. After death the Judgment. Are we ready? How would it affect us to see Christ now coming? It is a solemn question, and we do well to answer it carefully.

7s. Seek, my soul, the narrow gate,
Enter ere it be too late;
Many ask to enter there
When too late to offer prayer.
God from mercy's seat shall rise,
And forever bar the skies:
Then, though sinners **cry without**,
He will say, "I know you **not**."

Mournfully will they exclaim.
"Lord, we have professed thy **Name**,
We have ate with thee, and heard
Heavenly teaching in thy word."
Vain, alas! will be their plea,
Workers of iniquity;
Sad their everlasting lot;
Christ will say, "I know you not."

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

9 Not because we have not power, but to

make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. 2 THESS. iii. 1-18.

Paul had confidence in prayer; hence prayed for his brethren, and desired their prayers. We often say, "Pray for me." The first thing with Paul was the success of his work. If the gospel had free course, and converts were multiplied, it was enough. Ungodly men were opposing him, as they do all ministers, and he would be delivered from them, since they would not receive the gospel. No church is perfect; faulty persons will be found in all organizations; hence the need of practical precepts. Paul's letters abound in them, and they are full of wisdom. The disorderly walkers here refused to work, and the apostle would have no fellowship with them. Religion is not to be made a cloak for idleness. As "an idle brain is the devil's workshop," idlers become busybodies in others' affairs. The mind which is not busy doing good, will soon be busy in doing evil. The apostle could confidently point to his own example, by which he had enforced his words. He encourages his brethren to continue in well-doing. It is patient continuance in well-doing which gains the reward. For gains or pleasures, men cease not their efforts; and he who seeks to win souls or gain heaven, should persevere, no matter how much ridicule or opposition he may encounter. The efforts of Jesus to save us were unwearied; we should be as persevering in winning others.

Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore.
Touched by a loving heart,
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

47

Rescue the perishing,
Duty demands it;
Strength for thy labor the Lord will provide.
Back to the narrow way
Patiently win them;

Tell the poor wanderer a Saviour has died.

97 O, how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

103 How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word.

108 Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments.

109 My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

110 The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111 Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.

113 I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.

114 Thou art my hiding-place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

PSALMS, cxix. 97-114.

The psalmist was a diligent student of God's word. He was not forced to this study. It was a love service. He took great delight in it, and it exerted a wonderful influence over him. He loved the promises; he loved the law. Meditation upon the promises cheered, encouraged, and comforted his heart, while reflection upon the law restrained him from evil ways. It is good to read the word of God; but the greatest profit comes from careful, protracted meditation. He who stores in his memory one verse of Scripture in the morning will find opportunities of meditation during the day, by which means he will be able to extract much sweetness, richness, and strength from it. Such a course made the writer wiser than his enemies, and gave him a good understanding. The word thus became sweeter than honey in his mouth. There is a good lesson for us all here. This word thus carefully meditated upon became a lamp to his feet. This is the nature of God's truth. It discovers to us that, concerning God and ourselves, which we can find in no other way. It shows us what is wrong and dangerous, and directs us in this dark world. It is not simply a light to gratify our eyes and fill our heads with speculations; but it is a light to our feet and our path, so that our steps may be ordered in heavenly wisdom. Finding such good results, David resolves to give heed to the word, and take it as his heritage forever. What it did for him, it will do for all who love it as he did.

"A lamp unto my feet"
God's word did prove;
A "still, small voice," and sweet,
Spoke thus in love:—

"Whoso, through night and day,
God's way pursues,
Him shall he teach the way
That he shall choose."

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O Lord, according to thy loving-kindness.

160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.

164 Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.

165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

166 Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.

169 Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord: give me understanding according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

171 My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.

173 Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.

174 I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord; and thy law is my delight.

175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

PSALMS, cxix. 159-176.

What longings there are in every heart for peace and rest! The psalmist tells us here in one of these verses where it may be found. "Great peace have they who love thy law." Making God's word the rule of life, and being governed by its holy precepts, they find rest of soul. They are easy; they have a holy serenity; none enjoy themselves as they do. They find abundant satisfaction in doing as God's word requires, and great enjoyment in reflecting upon it. The work of righteousness is peace, such as the world can neither give nor take away. There may be much trouble without, but within there is great peace. Those who love the world have much vexation, for it is constantly disappointing them; while those who love God's word have the sweetest peace, because it goes beyond all their expectation; they are resting on the rock. They find no stumbling blocks in their way, nor are they entangled in guilt or grief. Providence may often disappoint them, but God's promises never fail them. They "know that all things work together for their good;" hence they never quarrel with anything which God does. Because of this, the writer took great delight in the law. It brought perpetual sunshine to his soul, and enabled him to render a cheerful obedience to all the requirements of God. This experience was not confined to the psalmist; it is that of every believing child of God. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

There is peace in the valley of blessing so sweet,

And plenty the land doth impart,
And there's rest for the weary, worn trav-
eller's feet,

And joy for the sorrowing heart.

There is love in the valley of blessing so sweet,

Such as none but the blood-washed may feel,
When heaven comes down redeemed spirits to

greet,
And Christ sets his covenant seal.

7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

REVELATION, xxii. 7-21.

What words so fitting as these on this last day of the year! Our days are numbering fast; the time of our departure draweth near: how impressive, therefore, these closing words of Revelation, telling us the Lord Jesus will quickly come! Whatever change there is in us must be made in this brief life. After the Judgment there can be none: he who is filthy must be filthy still. The doom of those who continue in sin, despite all their warnings, will soon be irrevocably fixed. Their reward will be according to their work. The necessity of their being will keep them outside of that holy city, and forever separate from the pure and holy. Unconverted reader, will you not heed this most gracious invitation, and come and freely drink from the healing Fountain? Close the year by closing with Christ. Christian reader, for a year we have gone about the garden of our Lord. We have fed on manna, and drank daily the water of life. We have found gems, picked rare flowers, and to-day we have a cluster of Eschol's richest grapes. We are encouraged to persevere, since the reward of holiness is holiness. Having washed our robes in Jesus' blood, and kept his commands, we shall have free access through the gates into the city. Blessed city! where God reigns, and all the holy are found. Blessed company! Blessed employments! Are we not ready to join the cry of the apostle, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

8s & 7s. When we hear the music ringing
In the bright, celestial dome,
When sweet angel voices, singing,
Gladly bid us welcome home,
To the land of ancient story,
Where the Spirit knows no care,
In that land of light and glory,
Shall we know each other there?

O ye weary, sad, and tossed ones,
Droop not, faint not, by the way!
Ye shall join the loved and just ones
In the land of perfect day!
Harp-strings, touched by angel fingers,
Murmured in my raptured ear;
Evermore their sweet song lingers,
"We shall know each other there."

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